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CAMP LIFE

IN

FLORIDA;

A HANDBOOK

FOR

SPORTSMEN AND SETTLERS.

COMPILED BY

CHARLES HALLOCK,

AUTHOR OF "THE FISHING TOURIST."

PUBLISHED BY

FOREST AND STREAM PUBLISHING COMPANY.

AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY, AGENTS.

1876.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFATORY	7
I.—BIRDS-EYE GLANCE AT FLORIDA	16
II.—OUTFIT FOR SPORTSMEN	26
III.—HINTS FOR SOUTHERN HUNTING	30
IV.—COASTWISE ROUTES OF TRAVEL	35
V.—GAME ANIMALS AND BIRDS OF FLORIDA	41
VI.—GAME FISH OF FLORIDA	50
VII.—THREE MONTHS IN FLORIDA FOR ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS	67
VIII.—SUPPLEMENTARY HINTS FOR CHEAP RECREATION	85
IX.—UP THE ST. JOHNS RIVER	92
X.—INDIAN RIVER	102
XI.—FLORIDA THE PROMISED LAND	107
XII.—FORT CAPRON	113
XIII.—FISHING AT ST. AUGUSTINE	118
XIV.—BLACK BASS FISHING ON SPRUCE CREEK	123
XV.—HUNTING THE PANTHER	127
XVI.—THE ENVIRONS OF TALLAHASSEE	135
XVII.—PRIVATE DOUGHERTY AND THE BASS	140
XVIII.—PET BIRDS OF ST. AUGUSTINE	145
XIX.—STEAM YACHTING ON THE ST. JOHNS	151
XX.—AMONG THE SEMINOLES	179

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PAGE

XXI.—In the Cypress Swamps 194
XXII.—Cruising along Shore..... 201
XXIII.—Shooting at Salt Lake..... 217
XXIV.—The Okeechobee Expedition..... 224
XXV.—Florida Travel 253
XXVI.—Homosassa-Tallahassee..... 259
XXVII.—South West Florida..... 264
1.—Fernandina to Cedar Keys..... 264
2.—Manatee Sarasota and Gasparilla..... 269
3.—Among the Keys..... 277
4.—Meteorology..... 284
5.—Punta Rassa and Caloosahatchie..... 291
6.—Up the Caloosahatchie River..... 296
7.—Visit to Okeechobee 305
8.—Indian Mounds and Canals..... 312
9.—Tampa..... 321
10.—Subterranean Streams..... 328
11.—A Sportsman's Paradise..... 334
12.—Suggestions to Tourists..... 343

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CAMP LIFE IN FLORIDA.

PREFATORY.

THIS volume is a compilation from the columns of the sportsmen's journal known as the "Forest and Stream." It is, in great part, the outcome of two special commissions sent by the publishers of that paper to explore southern and south-western Florida—one of them to Lake Okeechobee, in the winter of 1873–'74, and the other, in the winter and spring of 1874–'75, to the section laved by the waters of the Gulf of Mexico. To some of its readers it will therefore appear at second-hand; but republication is justified and extenuated by the fact that it has been pressed by repeated solicitations of gentlemen who appreciate the value of the information its chapters contain. So little is known of the Florida Peninsula, and so very meagre are the written accounts of its geography and resources, that the citizens of Florida have, privately and through the press and public meetings, acknowledged to the editor his substantial service rendered to the State. Now, more than ever, is attention being directed to the Land of Flowers. Winter visitors in vast numbers migrate thither as regularly as the birds of passage. Twenty thousand people

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visited St. Augustine last winter, and will be multiplied in the next. The hotel accommodations there have been trebled within five years, and are still increasing. Not only at Jacksonville, Green Cove Springs, and other favorite resorts on the St. Johns river, but also on the eastern seaboard and the south-west coast, hotels are being erected for use in the approaching season. New steamers have been added to the St. Johns river lines, and increased facilities opened for communication with the North. Agricultural resources have been developed beyond expectation. Lands have been opened that are richly adapted to the cultivation of the orange, banana, guava, and pineapple, while the early northern markets for green peas, cucumbers, strawberries, tomatoes, and melons, offer pecuniary temptations to gardeners that cannot be overlooked. Agricultural and emigration societies have been established, and newspapers devoted to the economic interests of the State. Land for well-located farms has appreciated five times its value in three years, and real estate has advanced to fancy prices at the principal watering-places. Northern merchants have built princely residences there; considerable settlements have been made at numerous points on the coast and in the interior; and old familiar places are no longer recognized, such changes have a few years wrought. Even that old travesty on railroads, the wooden line from Tocoi to St. Augustine, has given place to iron rails, quick transit, and comfortable passenger coaches. Invalids throng its health-giving atmosphere and healing springs. Sportsmen find rich returns in sections that are alive with game, and which, only two years ago, were unknown and inaccessible. There is no place on this continent like Florida, for both game and fish.

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Among other modern improvements, a railroad is projected, to connect Lake Harris with the St. Johns river, at Hawkinsville on Lake George. The lands on Lake Harris are among the best in East Florida. The scenery is unusually beautiful and attractive. Frost seldom, if ever, injures the sugar-cane; it tassels, and grows from fifteen to twenty feet in height. Lake Harris connects with Lakes Griffin and Huestis. The timber around the lakes is tall and stately. Fine fish in abundance abound in their waters. This section is healthy, and is rapidly filling up with new settlers, and will in a few years become one of the most interesting settlements in this country. These settlers find much profit in the culture and sale of fruits and vegetables for the early northern markets. Even in the interior of the State, notably at Lake City, many of the citizens are speaking of giving up the cultivation of cotton, and turning their attention to English peas and other vegetables for shipment to northern markets. Several intend trying tobacco, and, if successful, it will soon become a leading production. Eighteen years ago, with the exception of Welaka, scarcely anything was to be seen but the interminable forests along the St. Johns river. There was scarcely a settlement or clearing to mark the advance of civilization. What a change now appears! landings, clearings, houses, and orange groves map out to the eye of the traveller the rapid improvement now going on.

With regard to orange culture, the "Rural Carolinian" says that trees can be had at some wild groves for the getting. At others, ten to twenty-five cents each is the price. An ordinary sail-boat will carry thirty to seventy-five trees, averaging two inches in diameter, and

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a round trip of twenty to forty miles can be made with a load in three or four days. If judiciously taken up, carefully handled, and properly planted, from January until March, and the sweet bud put in in May or June, they will grow three or four feet the same year, and sometimes will bear the next. Nearly all will bear the third year, with proper attention, and the fifth will reimburse all expenses. From the present stand-point, looking through the experience of others, and taking success as a guide and error as a warning, a straighter and shorter path (fast becoming a plain, well-beaten highway) can be taken to success. Sweet seedlings, from three to five years old, cost twenty-five cents to one dollar each, according to age and size. They are hardy, rapid growers, and usually bear the seventh year. The effect of budding or grafting is the same on them as the sour tree. Field crops are usually made three or four years, widening each year the space between the rows and trees. The past has presented no difficulty in the way of orange culture, which energy and good judgment will not overcome.

One of the most useful improvements contemplated, is the canal now being laid out by the United States Coast Survey, across the narrow strip of dividing lands between the Indian river proper and Mosquito lagoon, where the present canal has been cut. This strip of land is coquina rock, soft, and very easy to excavate, about ten feet above the water, and only eight hundred yards wide from this canal north to the head of navigable waters. On the Tomoko the channel is open and clear. The distance is about seventy-five miles. From thence across the land to navigable waters of Haws' creek, the distance cannot exceed ten miles, and the

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average height above the water level of both streams cannot be over six feet. No dams or locks will be required; there will always be water enough. In fact, these two canals will make Indian river a tributary to the St. Johns one hundred times more valuable than the whole upper St. Johns. This scheme, the Palatka "Herald" says, is receiving the gravest attention of the most practical men.

There seems no doubt that the population and developed resources of Florida are destined to double in ten years. Those who have some prescience will do well now to take time by the forelock, that they may reap coming advantages.

Very little of value to the sportsman, the yachtsman, or the intending settler, remains unsaid in this book regarding these abundant resources, or the lines of internal communication. The game and fish are here scientifically classified; the routes of travel, coastwise and internal, are accurately outlined; ample instructions are given to the sportsman and tourist; the capabilities and profits of the soil, with eligible localities for settlement, sojourn, health, or pleasure, are indicated to those who desire to become permanent or temporary residents. In its entirety the volume is just what has been long wanted and much asked for; and therefore the editor offers no apology for the manner in which its material has been appropriated and collated. Those who have contributed to its contents will be recognized as well qualified and reliable.

It may be literally asserted that the southern portion of the peninsula of Florida has never been settled. Ancient as was the old Spanish tenure, and obstinately contested as was the possession of its territory for two

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centuries and a half, the population at no one period was ever considerable, while the feeble settlements were widely scattered and confined to eligible points upon the lower St. John and the seaboard. The interior was occupied by the Seminole Indians, and the negroes whom they held as slaves, while the innermost jungles wherein they dwelt were almost impenetrable, as events proved, even to the well-appointed armies of the United States, which, forty years ago, were delegated to hunt them out. When, finally, the great body of the Indians were induced to migrate to the West, some spirit of curiosity or adventure, or hope incited by vague statements of the fertility, fecundity, and tropical luxuriance of the interior, prompted a few to attempt settlements there; but their advance was invariably barred by a cordon of swamp, lagoon, and jungle, that swarmed with repulsive reptiles and noxious insects, making occupation not only unbearable, but dangerous. Nevertheless, the desire that by nature becomes insatiate when unsatisfied, the incentive to explore where mysteries hide, has been burning continually, and attempts have been periodically repeated to explore the unknown penetralia. Occasionally some survivor of the Seminole war would recall for eager listeners some shadowy reminiscences of a great interior lake, beside whose limpid shores military outposts were planted after assiduous toil through the morass that intervened, and dilate upon the luxuriant farms that were found where the Red men once inhabited.* These statements gave color to traditional rumors, and stimulated the desire of those

* Lake Okeechobee was frequently visited by officers of the regular army engaged in the several campaigns against the Seminoles in that section. The gallant Captain Gréland, of the Fourth

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who came, to regard the Everglades and Okeechobee as a forbidden Eden, which none might enter except by the sesame of some secret portal. The evidences that some undiscovered route existed, by which the lake could be, and had been, reached in earlier times, at last became so indubitable as to determine the publishers of "Forest and Stream" to fit out an exploring expedition with all the appliances necessary to success. Volunteers were in readiness, and the expedition started about December 1, 1873. It was headed by Mr. F. A. Ober, a young naturalist of Massachusetts, possessing all those qualifications indispensable to the accomplishment of its object which are so rarely found in combination, viz., physical toughness and endurance, pluck, push, dogged perseverance, a thorough knowledge of woodcraft in general and of so much of this portion of Florida as he had acquired by previous visits, skill with the canoe, the rod, and the rifle, and an intelligent acquaintance with drawing, photography, and natural history. To this valuable stock in trade he added an outfit complete in all its requirements of boats, implements, guides, photographic instruments, etc. He was absent four months, and the successful result is shown in the chapters that follow over the signature of "Fred Beverly." Only those who have engaged in similar service can appreciate the difficulties that beset his endeavor. More than twenty miles of the journey was accomplished by wading and pushing their boat by hand through swamps swarming with alligators, and infested with poisonous snakes and all kinds of creeping, stinging, and flying vermin. Mud, water, and heat made the transit most fatiguing, trailing vines that con-

Artillery, once a professor at the United States Military Academy at West Point, now lies buried upon its banks.

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stantly barred their progress had to be cleared away, and whenever they found a bit of *terra firma* solid enough to camp on, it was scarcely more than six inches above the surrounding mire.

Of Lake Okeechobee itself few praises can be sung. It is a vast lagoon, surrounded by marshes, with shores scarcely above its level in any place. Writers who pretended to have visited it, invested it with a romance that was very far from the realization. It was represented to be studded with islands, and flanked with bold, rocky shores, and forests of mahogany, palmetto, and fragrant magnolia; and ruins were found on the islands, and strange creatures inhabited the earth, air, and water. These, however, are as mythical as was the original fact of its supposed existence.

The second expedition occupied the winter of 1874 and the spring of 1875. It covered the whole of southwestern Florida, a section but little known beyond its limits, but which is proven to be one of the choicest of the delectable lands of the State. It was under the charge of Dr. Charles J. Kenworthy, an old campaigner in many foreign countries, but now a resident of Jacksonville, Florida, whose efforts were heartily seconded and essentially expedited by the officers of the various lines of coastwise and interior communication, who furnished him with free passes and transportation for his boat and outfit, whenever asked for, throughout the field of exploration. The telegraph companies also rendered their services when needed, and at Punta Rassa even provided store room for his boat and implements, the narrative whereof is written over the signature of "Al Fresco."

In other chapters the charms of the St. Johns river

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life are unfolded by Com. L. A. Beardslee, United States Navy, and L. W. Ledyard, Esq., in a way to make them the most attractive and enjoyable ; there are a few miscellaneous sketches by General Jordan, Major H. W. Merrill, and Captain Aug. R. Egbert, United States Army, and Asa Wall, Esq., of Virginia ; while the contributions to Natural History by those well-known students, S. C. Clarke, C. J. Maynard, and George A. Boardman, have a special value to the student and scientist. The book will certainly not fail of the appreciation it deserves.

CHAS. HALLOCK, *Editor.*

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I.

BIRD'S-EYE GLANCE AT FLORIDA.

IT is a singular fact that for a part of the year at least three-fourths of Florida is under water. After such an introduction my readers will perhaps think that I have chosen a very unattractive subject, for they can scarcely see what there is that can possibly be interesting in *swamps*, even though they are vast, and teeming with an exuberant growth of vegetation, or in sluggish rivers, if they do abound in all classes of animal life. Had I nothing to write about, however, excepting the submerged sections, I trust I could find something even there which would interest and perhaps instruct my readers. But it must be remembered that the State of which I am speaking contains nearly as much land as is occupied by New England, and that notwithstanding three-fourths of it is under water, the number of square miles which are never flooded considerably exceed the area of Massachusetts. This country has also considerable value, and the United States was aware of this fact, for in 1819 $15,000,000 were paid to Spain for relinquishing her claims. Although the Government has doubtless committed many errors, this purchase cannot be considered as one of them. For, aside from the question of the protection afforded to our southern borders, this peninsula is certainly a desirable acquisition to the Union.

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The water which covers so much of Florida is both detrimental and beneficial to the inhabitants. Much arable land is rendered worthless from this cause, but it is by means of the numerous rivers and bayous that the settlers gain ready access to the interior. The St. Johns is the largest river in the State, and forms the principal thoroughfare to the numerous little towns which are situated on its banks. As the region through which this river flows contains as many inhabitants as any other portion of the State, I will endeavor to convey some idea of this section by describing what I have seen while making several trips up this stream. I say up, but as the St. Johns rises nearly two hundred miles south of its outlet, this term will perhaps give an erroneous idea, for this is the only river in the United States that flows directly north, and as the peninsula lies north and south, this stream runs parallel with the coast as far as Jacksonville ; then turning directly east flows into the Atlantic ocean, within twenty-five miles of the northern boundary of the State, thus traversing in its course nearly two-thirds of the entire length of Florida.

Jacksonville is the largest city in the State, and although of recent growth compared with other towns, contains about 10,000 inhabitants, and is the centre of trade. Several lines of small river steamers form the means of communication with the interior.

I found myself on one of these little steamers early one December morning, gliding over the sun-lit waters. The river for about a hundred miles is very wide, being a succession of lakes, on which account the Indians named the stream "Welaka," which in their language signifies the river of lakes. These lakes vary from two to ten miles in width, and as the boat kept in the mid-

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dle, we could see but little of the shores, excepting when we called at various towns. The small size of these villages surprised me much, for I had long been familiar with their names on the maps, and although some of them have been settled for about three hundred years, at the time of my first visit, in 1868, they contained but three or four houses. Of course, in the days when the Spaniards occupied Florida these places were much larger, being important military posts, and formed the homes of many inhabitants. They have deteriorated much since, but are now growing slowly; how slowly may be seen by the fact that after an absence of four years I again visited this section and found that some villages had added only one or two houses to their number, while others remained as I had previously seen them. I have used the term houses in speaking of the inhabited structures along the upper St. Johns, but shanties would perhaps convey a better idea of their appearance. It will be a source of much wonder why the steamers touched at such places, but it must be understood that they are with a few exceptions representatives of the towns in East Florida, and contained post-offices. We stopped then to leave the mail, and frequently to take on wood, or occasionally found a passenger waiting. And odd passengers they were too, many of them genuine Florida "crackers."

At a wooding-up station where there was but one dwelling, a queer looking specimen of humanity came on board in the shape of a long, lank individual, clad in homespun. In one hand he carried an old-fashioned rifle, and with the other led a fine looking horse, upon which was strapped a large saddle, with a saddle-bag and an axe-handle hanging on either side. This singular

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being had a powder-horn suspended from his brawny neck, and his matted black hair hung down to his shoulders, while his unkempt beard reached nearly to his waist. A pair of sinister eyes looked out from under the shaggy brows, which were shaded by a slouched hat. He was evidently a hunter by profession. At one of these stopping places we dropped a little dried-up man, whose countenance indicated an uncertain age. He might have been twenty or even fifty, for he was evidently one of the Rip Van Winkle type of men who can lie down and sleep an age or two in the wilderness without trouble. From this sleep they will arise half awake, and again plod through the world, no more or less musty-looking or dried up than before. Such men, even while in infancy, have scarcely enough flesh to cover their bones. As they grow older this little expands, until a certain age, when it hardens; then old Time may shake his glass over their heads without producing the slightest effect, or hack at them with his rusty scythe in vain—they look not an hour older. Such was the bodily appearance of the man whom we dropped at this place. He was clad in a very dirty suit of homespun cotton cloth, while a satchel of the same material hung at his side. His not very prepossessing face was shaded by an old palmetto hat, from beneath which his long flaxen hair hung in tangled skeins. His stockingless feet, thrust into a pair of broad-soled shoes, proclaimed him a cracker of the lowest class.

The steamers move slowly against the current, so that in twenty-four hours we had accomplished but one hundred miles of our journey, and on the following morning we were crossing Lake George. This is a very

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large expanse of water, about ten miles in diameter. At the southern extremity the river suddenly narrows, so that it is but a few rods across. Here the scenery changes entirely. The stately live-oaks and pines of the more northern St. Johns give place to the tropical-looking palmetto and the graceful-foliaged sweet bay. Vegetation is also much more advanced, and as the steamer almost brushed against the luxuriant foliage, we could catch the odors of thousands of flowering shrubs growing in the dense forest which lay on either side. It was indeed a scene of surpassing loveliness, to which I can scarcely do justice. One must stand, as I stood that morning, with every sense rapt in profound admiration of the beautiful panorama that was passing before the eyes, and with the south wind, laden with those delightful odors, blowing gently across the face, to thoroughly appreciate it. For every turn of the now winding river disclosed new beauties for enjoyment.

At first the brain is confused with the multiplicity of objects that are presented to the gaze. Gradually, however, the eye becomes accustomed to the mass of green, and selects objects of greater interest from the whole. From the exuberant growth of creepers and shrubs which line the water's edge, the attention is drawn to the gray, straight trunks of the palmettos, with their stiff fan-like fronds. The dark green of these is relieved by the paler foliage of the sweet gum, while high over all hang the giant branches of the lofty black walnuts drooped with festoons of Spanish moss. Large bunches of the emblematic mistletoe are brought out in strong relief against the blue sky, with their bright green colors heightened by their more sombre surroundings. An occasional group of the gloomy

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cypress might be seen among this sea of living green, raising their dark trunks covered with leafless branches from the swampy ground. As we passed onward our attention was attracted by numerous orange groves, which were growing upon shell mounds, with the golden fruit relieved by the dark green and shining leaves. This scene was rendered intensely interesting by the multitude of birds which swarmed on all sides. Numerous ducks and gallinules swam among the aquatic plants on the river's margin. At one point we saw a group of red and black-headed vultures feeding upon the carcass of some animal. Large numbers of wood ducks started up everywhere, flying but a short distance, then tamely settling down again. Among all this apparently peaceful life the great law of nature, which ordains that her subjects shall live by preying upon one another, was in full force. At every few rods along the river was perched a hawk. They sat silent and apathetic, but were only waiting for the coots and ducks to finish their morning meal of aquatic life before seizing the plumpest of them for breakfast. High overhead the osprey was sailing with motionless wings, in huge circles, gazing with eager eyes upon the fishes below. The ever-watchful bald eagle was perched upon the lofty black walnuts or cypresses, intent upon the motions of the fish-hawk. This magnificent scenery, in which is mingled so much of life and animation, must attract the attention and call forth the admiration of the most casual observer. What, then, must be the sensations of the earnest student of nature? Words fail to express the intense ecstasy that he feels as object after object presents itself to his bewildered gaze. The brain is completely overwhelmed, and can simply grasp the mingled mass as it

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is seen, and in calmer moments arrange each in its proper place.

The sun had now reached a considerable height, and was shining hotly on the water. The captain of the steamer informed us that we might as well be on the look-out for alligators. About a dozen among the passengers produced rifles or shot-guns, and we took our stations on the upper deck. As we stood near the wheel-house an old negro, who was steering, exclaimed, "See, dar's one!" at the same time pointing toward a large object. His words were followed by the sharp crack of half a dozen rifles, and as many voices excitedly shouted, "I have killed him." But the loud laugh from some of the experienced hunters, and a broad grin on the black face of the pilot, told these amateurs that they had been sold. Their bullets had merely set free the gases contained in the carcass of a dead alligator.

A short distance beyond this point we saw a flock of about twenty wild turkeys on the river bank. They were beneath some orange trees, and were very tame. As we came in sight of them there was a simultaneous discharge of fire-arms; but in the excitement of the moment it was entirely without effect. The turkeys scattered right and left, and were soon lost in the thick underbrush. Soon after this the alligators became quite numerous, and the deck of the steamer presented an animated scene, resounding with the sharp crack of rifles. The hideous reptiles were in all positions; some were sleeping on the banks, others half in the water, and some were swimming swiftly about with only their ugly snouts and repulsive-looking eyes visible. Sometimes one would roll over in his death agony, after receiving a single shot. Then the attention of the whole party

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would be turned to one individual, and he would escape beneath the water, pierced with a dozen balls. They would die in all positions; some would turn over upon their backs, but oftener they would lie as they had been shot. The most fatal place for a ball to strike appeared to be in the head. The report that a rifle bullet will glance from the back of an alligator is entirely unfounded. I have seen them shot in every part of the body, and have yet to meet with a single instance of the kind. The ball always penetrates easily if thrown with ordinary force. Many of these reptiles are destroyed by the passengers of every steamboat which passes up and down the river, yet their numbers are scarcely diminished. The alligator grows to a large size, some measuring seventeen feet in length. The large ones are quite dangerous, but a closely allied species—the cayman, of South America, which is occasionally found in Florida —is particularly noticable for its fierceness. I have met with it but once.

Three of us were crossing the country which lies between Lake Harney and Indian river, on foot, when we came to a dense swamp. As we were passing through it we discovered a huge reptile, which resembled an alligator, lying in a stream just to the right of our path. He was apparently asleep. We approached cautiously within ten rods of him and fired two rifle shots in quick succession. The balls took effect just before his fore leg, and striking within two inches of each other, passed entirely through his body. As soon as he felt the wounds he struggled violently, twisting and writhing, but finally became quiet. We waded in and approached him, as he lay on a bed of green aquatic

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plants with his head toward us. It was resting on the mud, and one of the party was about to place his foot upon it, when a lively look in the animal's eyes deterred him. Stooping down, he picked up a floating branch and lightly threw it in the reptile's face. The result was somewhat surprising. The huge jaws opened instantly, and the formidable tail came round sweeping the branch into his mouth, where it was crushed and ground to atoms by the rows of sharp teeth. His eyes flashed fire and he rapidly glided forward. Never did magician of Arabian tale conjure up a fiercer looking demon by wave of his wand, than had been raised to life by a motion of the branch. For a moment we were too astonished to move. The huge monster seemed bent on revenge, and in another instant would be upon us. We then saw our danger, and quicker than a flash of light, thought and action came. The next moment the gigantic saurian was made to struggle on his back, with a bullet in his brain. It had entered his right eye, and had been aimed so nicely as not to cut the lids. To make sure of him this time we severed his jugular vein. While performing this not very delicate operation, he thrust out two singular-looking glands from slits in his throat. They were round and resembled a sea-urchin, being covered with minute projections. They were about the size of a nutmeg, and gave out a strong musky odor. We then took his dimensions, and found that he was over ten feet in length, while his body was larger round than a flour barrel. The immense jaws were three feet long, and when stretched open, would readily take in the body of a man. They were armed with rows of sharp white teeth. The tusks of the lower one, when

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it was closed, projected out through two holes in the upper, which fact proved to us that it was not a common alligator, but a true crocodile (*Crocodilus acurus*). This is the second instance on record of the capture of this reptile in the United States.

C. J. MAYNARD.

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II.

OUTFIT FOR SPORTSMEN.

IN preparing for a winter's campaign in Florida, one should take with him, if practicable, a tent and small boat. If they can be shipped by sailing vessel two weeks in advance of his sailing, they will reach Jacksonville in season for use, and at little cost. If sent by steamer the charge for freight will be enormous. A shot gun, rifle, ammunition, and fishing tackle should be taken from the North. The tent should be as light as possible, and so constructed that all the room can be utilized. The boat should be small, flat-bottomed and light. A large sail boat can be hired in Jacksonville at a reasonable price, and a man to sail it and do the cooking. Gun and rifle should be breech-loading, thus securing safety and despatch in loading. Revolvers may be useful. Big bowie knives are superfluities. Everybody takes them, and everybody finds them in the way. Wear old clothes; half the pleasure in camping out is to be able to rough it. Don't put on fancy costumes expecting to "make a spread," as no one will appreciate the effort or effect. Wear woollen clothing at all times. For the feet, take good stout shoes, lacing up tightly about the ankle. A pair of tight (not tight fitting) boots, may be very good for a short, wet walk, but for an all-day's tramp, through swamp and pine-woods,

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shoes are far superior. Two pairs good woollen, and one rubber blanket. A mosquito bar is indispensable, as many nights the tormenting insects call their own. If the country on the coast be visited, the "bar" should be made of thin cotton or lawn, to keep out the "sand-flies," insects so small as hardly to be discernible, but with a bite like the burn of a hot iron. It would be well to take a little salve and thin plaster for cuts and bruises. In the line of medicine, one can take a whole apothecary's shop, if so disposed, but, excepting a little whiskey and quinine, the former for snake-bites, which seldom occur, and the latter for imaginary fever, no medicine will be needed, except for particularly squeamish folks who think life not worth the living out of sight of an "R," or quack-doctor's laboratory. For light at night, a lantern and candles will be sufficient, though kerosene, where little transportation is to be made, is preferable. Buy it in New York in five-gallon can, boxed. It will always sell for twice its cost. The keen, bracing air gives more pungency to a haunch of venison or brace of quail than all the sauces-piquante ever concocted. A bunch of Spanish moss is infinitely superior to a napkin, and the clear waters of some spring to the finger-bowl. And here a word as to water.

Nearly all the water in East Florida is impregnated more or less with lime, or some mineral or salt that gives it a "flat" taste to the uninitiated, and a drink of raw unadulterated water is not always acceptable. Some people "qualify" it—indeed the majority of settlers "qualify" it so much that the original taste of the *aqua* is lost in that of the qualifier. That is all—a word to the wise. We advise a plain mode of living. Take hard-bread, "self-raising flour," pork, salt, potatoes, brown

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sugar, rice or hominy, Borden's condensed milk, and coffee, a little jelly for venison, butter, pepper, and mustard. Venison, fish, and game birds may be on the bill of fare every day, but again they may not. No one should start down the river depending upon a supply, as the game is regulated and controlled by a multitude of laws that the visitor knows nothing about. Preserved fruits, meats, etc., are not necessary, though sometimes found acceptable—they don't stay in camp long. Regarding cooking utensils, if cooking is to be done in the usual way over an open fire, they should be a "bake kettle" or oven, a foot in diameter; frying-pan, same dimensions, with a long handle; tin plate, plated knives and forks, pint tin-cups, iron or tin spoons, and butcher knife. A regular camp kit is preferable, however.* If a stove is preferred, go to the tin-smith's and have him make a sheet-iron box, two feet long, one broad, open at one end. The door a sheet of iron, to slide in a groove, perpendicularly, acting as a draught regulator. The legs should be flat, fastened to the box by hinges, shutting under it when packed. The pipe small, and in joints, to be packed in the stove. A piece of tin should be taken to fasten to the tent to run the pipe through. With a such stove, well supplied with "light wood" or pitch pine, a fire can be sustained that will vacate the tent in short metre. If the camper-out prefers to embark upon one of the many steamers that navigate the St.

* H. L. Duncklee of Boston, manufactures a very complete camp stove and kit, which packs into a small space and is quite portable. Lalance & Grosjean, of Beekman street, New York, supply a very desirable kit also. A camp-kettle made by a firm in Marquette, Michigan, is much used by the lumbermen, and is regarded as an acquisition to a sportsman's outfit.

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John's, he can reach any point available in East Florida. To assist him, a list of prices will be given to the different places on the river, as they are reached in a sail down the stream. The steamers City Point, Dictator, Nick King, and Lizzie Baker make the trips to Pilatka seventy-five miles from Jacksonville), upon arrival from Savannah and Charleston. The Florence, a fine steamer; makes daily trips to Pilatka. The Darlington, Hattie, and Starlight, to Enterprise, two hundred miles, twice a week, each. The Ocklawaha and Silver Springs to Lake Harney and Salt Lake, one week.

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III.

HINTS FOR SOUTHERN HUNTING.

THE Gulf States, with woodland in unlimited areas, with broad rivers of fresh water and estuaries without end, with open sea beaches and rocky coral harbors, invite Northern hunters; and if perchance he meets the Southrons in their homes, or at their camps, a new and congenial companionship is assured, that once enjoyed will not fade from memory, for Southern welcomes are as broad as Southern fields, and as full of sunshine.

In going far from home there is usually an inclination to carry many articles of impedimenta that are found not to repay the annoyance of their care. We will not counsel those who would go with much "duffel," as the guides term luggage: they will suit their own abundant fancy; nor will we hint to the luxurious yachtsman how to store his lockers with dainties, although pleasant memories recall the way it has been bountifully done, but will venture on a few simple suggestions that may be of some value to persons going South.

First and foremost, as to guns: For all but boat shooting, guns to be used under the hot sun that, even in winter, falls on the Southern fields with a fierce heat, should be light, and not of too large bore, to economize weight of ammunition. A rifle should be short, and one chosen that will in opening be free from long levers

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that may catch in bridle reins, will avoid annoyance. For alligators, the Mead explosive ball is unequalled, and its use increases very materially the chances of so shocking and stunning those tenacious animals, as to recover them at once. As they lie on logs, and on slimy banks, they usually retain life enough to wriggle into the water, when they sink; but we have shot them with the Mead bullet, and have seen them dash out upon the land, and be unable to get any command of their movements. All the talk of a ball glancing harmlessly from their scales may have been true years ago, but the modern rifle carries its missiles through the scales and skull, and penetrates any part of the animal, even at a long range. For all but "'gaitor," the shot gun is the convenient arm. Deer are usually "jumped" and shot bounding through the large leaves of the low palmetto, and at all times one load of fine shot is needed for quail, snipe, and plumaged birds, that are constantly fluttering up.

Wild turkeys are hard to kill, but often an expert caller will bring them so near that missing is needless, and the use of a wire cartridge of large shot in one barrel will do all that can be done to insure success in getting this superb bird, which is a far finer trophy, and more difficult to obtain than any that tempts the sportsman from his camp while the day has not dawned. The hen turkey should never be shot (she can be readily distinguished by her color), as the broods will at once disperse and thus deprive the sportsman of his pastime. Quail should not be shot after the 1st of March.

No dainty split bamboo rods, nor leaders of tinted gut need be carried south of the mountains of Carolina; for the trout, grayling, and *salmo salar* live not in the streams that bear away the washings from rich mellow

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bottom lands. The trout of these rivers is a black bass, and when gar-fish, cat-fish and other heavy-mouthed fellows try physical force with the angler, artful devices are not called for; but one or two stiff boat rods, all the better if in pairs with all the joints interchangeable, and some large lines, gimp and wire-mounted hooks, strong spoons, a gaff and one or two spears for torch fishing, and some ponderous sinkers for tide-ways, will fit the fisherman for all ordinary work. If he wishes a new sensation, it may be obtained at the end of a half-inch rope, with shark hook and chain, but beware of any coil about the legs, and get up anchor for a tow seaward, if a large shark or swordfish accepts the challenge.

About Anastasia Island, St. Augustine, the Minorcans capture huge swordfish and sharks by fastening the rope to a post, and carrying the hook out in a boat, leave it, and retire to conduct their share of the conflict on *terra firma*. A boat is as needful in Florida as a horse on the plains. For short trips from the settlements, nothing will be more convenient, and render the sportsman more independent, than a flat-bottomed boat, with small sail, centre board, and a water-tight end with tight trap to carry dry clothing, tea, sugar, etc., to protect from the frequent showers. Floating quietly with the current or tide, a patient hunter may surprise almost all the game birds and animals, and he will see more of interest in the little streams than in miles of the frequented channels. For exploration and travel a boat eighteen to twenty-two feet long, four and a-half or five feet beam, with the full width carried to the stern, built with a flat keel, and broad bearings to insure light draft, fitted with centre-board and sail, the

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latter on sliding topmast for compactness, will be found the best. When anchored, the bow will point to the wind. A tent, open aft, may be hung under the boom, spread with stretchers, and furled sail; and with light boards a bed for three or four may be arranged, and cooking by spirit lamp be done at the wide stern. With such a boat, and two good negroes, boatmen (cooks they generally are), more interesting trips can be made than with a yacht, and more unfrequented points be reached. If cruising in the wide waters is intended, some considerable shear to the bow lines will make a drier and safer boat, and a canvas bow deck will do good service. Air cushions will be found very comfortable, and in mishaps they are invaluable as life-preservers.

One of H. L. Duncklee's stoves will fit out such a party, but a spirit lamp is very useful to heat water for a preventive punch, or for a bowl of soup from Liebig's extract of beef, and with it and an Old Dominion coffee pot, excellent hot coffee may be made, or Borden's Extract will give it more simply. Often for miles no hard ground is to be found, and some heating apparatus is indispensable. No one should brave the night air of the everglades without warm and stimulating food and drinks, and a little quinine will do no harm. Light wines are of great service, and the water flowing from the swamps will not harmed by a "wee drop," and for the rattlesnake or moccasin bite that never comes, the same is needful. Prudent ones usually do not wait for a bite, but show unbounded confidence in preventive measures.

For sleeping in camp, in this animated land of fleas, spiders, and the creeping things, so unfortunately taken

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into the ark, a hammock should be used; one arranged (as it may easily be), with a light canvas roof, with sides of netting. Two or three rafter-shaped triangles hung on a line will spread such a shelter, and in a canvas hammock under it, one can rest free from the companionship of guides and dogs, and without vivid ideas of snakes and centipedes. Sportsmen are often disabled by the fiercest animal in Florida, the flea. High boots will be some defence, but keep away from the vicinity of domestic animals, and sleep not in any of the "cracker" houses, but camp in remote pine woods and keep the dogs away from the tent. Such forest is comparatively free from mosquitoes, and in mid-winter the sand-flies are not very annoying.

For minor details the hints common to all hunting will afford a general idea.

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IV.

COASTWISE ROUTES OF TRAVEL.

WINTER is approaching, and numbers are undoubtedly looking forward with pleasure to the period when they will leave Old Boreas in the rear, and bask in the health-promoting sunbeams of Florida; and as the present seems an opportune time, I propose furnishing a few statements for the benefit of those who contemplate a visit to this State.

As the south-west coast (the scene of my last winter's wanderings) presents an attractive field for the true sportsman, I shall refer to it in this communication. I fancied that my articles published in the "Forest and Stream" were sufficiently explanatory, but from the large number of letters I have received, I find that something more is necessary, and I shall endeavor to furnish the required information.

Steamships leave Boston and Baltimore regularly for Savannah. Florida can also be reached by any of the various rail routes, and fares can be ascertained by inquiring at any of the principal offices. Steamships leave New York for Charleston three times weekly, and from Philadelphia every Saturday, connecting with railroad, and with the stanch, seaworthy, comfortable, and ably officered sea-going steamers, the Dictator and City Point. Fare from New York to Jacksonville, including state-room and meals, $27.50; excursion ticket, $50.

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Steamships leave New York for Savannah three times weekly, connecting with the steamers Dictator, City Point, and Lizzie Baker. If travellers prefer it, they can reach Jacksonville from Savannah by the Atlantic and Gulf railroad. Coupons of excursion tickets will be received by the company. Travellers will find this road supplied with excellent Pullman cars.

Gelpcke's line from New York to Fernandina consists of the well-known steamships Huntsville and Montgomery. The rates by this line are as follows: New York to Fernandina, $20, excursion ticket $35; New York to Jacksonville, $22.50, excursion $40; New York to Cedar Keys, $26, excursion $45; New York to Tampa and Manatee, $36; New York to Punta Rassa, rate not received, but presume about $40; New York to Key West, $46.

A direct line to Jacksonville is advertised, but we must await results before anything definite can be stated. Fare to Jacksonville as advertised, $20, excursion ticket $35. Jacksonville or Fernandina reached, the sportsman can take railroad, daily except Sunday, for Cedar Keys. If Homosassa is the objective point, a boat can be hired at from eight to ten dollars for the trip, or if disposed, the intending tourist or sportsman can communicate with Alfred E. Jones at Homosassa, and if timely notice is given, Mr. Jones would meet his guests at Cedar Keys and land them at his attractive home, free of charge. The only difficulty attending this arrangement is the fact, that there is but one mail per week to Homosassa, arriving on Mondays. Homosassa can be reached by another route: Steamer from Jacksonville to Silver Spring, a natural curiosity that should be visited by every tourist. Hack from Silver

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Spring to Ocala, fare one dollar. From Ocala to Homosassa, a distance of thirty-six miles, over a good road, in comfortable vehicle; charge for carriage from eight to twelve dollars, dependent upon number of passengers. Board at Homosassa, from ten to twelve dollars per week; accommodations good, table excellent; fishing and shooting superior; and we may add, rooms large and airy; verandas spacious; fresh milk and butter; oysters and oranges *ad libitum*.

Bronson, a point on the Fernandina and Cedar Keys railroad, is thirty miles from Homosassa. The ponds in the neighborhood afford fine bass fishing; quail and duck are plenty, and the sportsman may succeed in shooting turkeys or deer. Accommodations: hotels, fifteen dollars; private boarding houses, twelve; board one dollar per day, or five dollars per week. For information interview Mr. G. Levet.

With the exception of climate, bathing, and fishing, Cedar Keys presents but few attractions for tourists or sportsmen. We regret to state that the hotel accommodations cannot be recommended as A1. Sportsmen arriving at Cedar Keys and requiring information, need but call upon Mr. Gore, editor of the local paper, or on Willard and Roux, and mention that the liberty taken was in accordance with the suggestion of "Al Fresco."

The steamer Valley City, commanded by that jolly sea-dog, Captain McKay, leaves Cedar Keys every Friday for Tampa, Manatee, Punta Rassa, and Key West. Parties desirous of ascending the Caloosahatchie river, or of spending a few weeks on the coast, could take steamer to Punta Rassa, and from there ascend the river or explore Charlotte Harbor. For 'gaitor shooting, ascend the Caloosahatchie to the upper islands, six

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miles above Fort Myers, and thirty-one from Punta Rassa. Above the islands the disciple of Old Izaak can put in all his spare time in landing cavalli ranging from five to fifteen pounds. For fight and pluck we can recommend this fish. They take the spoon or spinner without hesitation, and we are of the opinion that they would not object to a salmon fly. For hunting and sea fishing we can recommend Tanibel, Lacosta, or Gasparilla islands. For a camping place for the invalid who requires a bracing sea breeze, an equable temperature, salt bathing, and life-giving sunbeams, we would say camp on the northern end of Gasparilla island. The island is two miles in length, and is well stocked with deer. At the entrance, or Little Gasparilla Pass, the fishing is unequalled. On the opposite flats beach birds are more than plentiful. The main land is distant about three hundred yards. In the centre of the island a lagoon with excellent water will be found; but by digging a hole in the sand (and planting an empty barrel in it) from twenty to eighty yards from the bay beach, fair drinking water can be obtained at low tide. If a party landed at Punta Rassa, a small sloop or schooner could be chartered to transport boat, provisions, and camp equipage to camping ground. A few weeks spent on one of the islands in Charlotte Harbor would do much to restore the invalid. Frosts are unknown; north-easters and north-westers lose their injurious influences before reaching these favored spots. A weekly mail is received at Punta Rassa, and supplies could be obtained through Captain McKay, of the Valley City. We have advised parties to camp on the end of the island, for, by pursuing this course, bushes and grass would be distant some hundred yards, and in conse-

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quence mosquitoes would not prove troublesome. To intending visitors I would say, secure coast survey charts of this harbor, two in number, obtainable at any large nautical store.

Returning northward, sportsmen could run the coast line from Little Gasparilla Inlet to Sarasota Inlet, a distance of thirty-eight miles. But unless they are familiar with sailing, and know how to pick their way between bars, and keep clear of breakers, we would advise them to take themselves and boat on board the Valley City and land at Tampa. At Tampa they would find good accommodations by calling upon Lieutenant Wall. Leaving Tampa Bay, with its islands stocked with deer, and every inlet furnishing superior fishing, they would reach Clear Water Harbor by the Indian Pass. From Clear Water Harbor they could run along within two or three miles of the main land in from three to five feet of water. A barrier reef exists from five to seven miles from the main land, and owing to the shallowness of the water, and the grassy nature of the bottom, the water is smooth. Bayous, coves, and small bays will be found in numbers along the coast line, and a good harbor can always be made. The voyageurs could enter and examine *en route* the attractive and beautiful springs at the heads of the Wiccawatchee, Cheseowillski, Homosassa, and Crystal rivers. During the winter months the gulf is usually as calm as a mill-pond, and can be safely navigated with a seventeen-foot Whitehall boat; but for the purpose of navigating shoal water and carrying plunder, we would recommend a batteau, such as is used on the Delaware river. If decked over and supplied with a centre-board and sail, such a craft would be found admirably adapted to the

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navigation of the south-west. Arrangements could be made for the cheap transportation of such a boat from New York to Cedar Keys by the New York and Fernandina line of steamers. But if money is no object, I would recommend intending sportsmen to secure a boat, with sailing master, at Cedar Keys, Tampa, or Manatee, at an expense of from four to five dollars per day. But I may remark that many of the boatmen along the coast have acquired a weakness, and if peace is desired the whiskey bottle must ~~be kept~~ under lock and key.

"AL FRESCO."

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V.

GAME ANIMALS AND BIRDS OF FLORIDA.

THE following quadrupeds and birds have been observed in Eastern Florida, but the presence of the latter is only noted in spring and winter; at least we have received no account of the fact that they are regular denizens. The quadrupeds embrace the *Felis concolor*, or panther, common in the unsettled part of the State; the *Lynx rufus*, also abundant; the *Canis Lupus*, or gray wolf (some nearly black), is rather scarce; the *Vulpus Virginianus*, or gray fox, is abundant, also the *Procyon Lotor*, or raccoon, the *Ursus Arctos*, or common bear, and the *Cariacus Virginianus*, or Virginia deer; this is of a very small size. The *Sciurus niger*, or Southern fox squirrel, is abundant, but is confined to pine woods; also the *Sciurus Carolinensis*, or gray squirrel, which is very tame. The *Lepus sylvaticus*, or gray rabbit; the *Lepus Palustris*, or marsh rabbit, and the *Didelphys Virginiana*, or opossum, are quite common.

The birds include the *Meleagris Gallopavo*, or wild turkey, which is very numerous; males often weigh twenty-five pounds; females six to ten pounds; the *Ortyx Virginianus*, or quail; very abundant; *Squartarola Helvetica*, or black-billed plover; the *Charadrius Virginicus*, or golden plover; the *Ægialitis vociferus*,

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or killdee plover; the *Ægialitis Wilsonius,* or Wilson plover, and the *Ægialitis melodius,* or piping plover. The plover were seen only in spring. The *Philohela minor,* or woodcock, is not common, but the *Gallinago Wilsoni,* or snipe, is. The latter go in large flocks and cover the whole country. The red-breasted snipe; the *Symphemia semipalmata,* or willet; the *Gambetta Flavipes,* or yellow legs; the *Gambetta Melanolenca,* or greater yellow legs; *Simosa Fedoa,* or marbled godwits, are also common. The *Numenieus Hudsonicus,* or Hudsonian curlew, and the *Numenieus Borealis,* or Esquimaux curlew, are rare, but the *Numenieus longirostris,* or long-billed curlew; the *Himantopus nigercollis* or black-necked stilt; the rails and gallinules, and the herons, cranes, and ibis, are abundant; the *Annas boschas,* or mallard, is very abundant, also the *Annas obscura,* or black duck; the latter duck has a lighter color; its neck is more like a female mallard, and it is said to breed in Florida. The *Dafila acuta,* or pintail; the *Nettion Carolinensis,* or green wingtail; the *Querquedula Discors,* or blue wingtail; the *Spatula Clypeata* or "Shoveller;" the *Marcea Americana,* or baldpate; the *Aix Sponsa,* or wood duck; the *Fulex Marila,* or scaup duck; the *Aythya Americana,* or red-head; the *Aythya Vallisneria,* or canvas-back; the *Bucephala albeola,* or butter-ball; *the Erismatura rubida,* or ruddy duck; the *Sophodytes Cucullatus,* or hooded merganser, and the Canada goose, are all abundant; the latter especially in the north-western portion of the State.

The following-named birds are found in the Lake Okeechobee region:

1. Wilson's thrush (*Turdus fuscescens*). Saw one

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specimen on Lookout Island; the only island dry enough to afford residence to birds of this family.

2. Cat-bird (*Galeoscoptes Carolinensis*). Upon the eastern shore, saw several in the elderberry thickets.

3. Blue-gray gnat-catcher (*Polioptila cærulea*). Abundant in the boxwood and ash on the eastern shore.

4. *Troglodytes aedon* (common wren). Rarely seen.

5. Yellow redpoll-warbler (*Dendroeca palmarum*). The most abundant species of the warblers here as elsewhere.

6. Yellow-crowned warbler (*Dendroeca coronata*). This species seemed to delight in the maple swamps, and where those trees were interspersed among the cypress, these beautiful little birds were to be found; comparatively abundant.

7. Maryland yellow throat (*Geothlypis trichas*). Rarely seen in the marshy hammocks bordering the shore.

8. White-bellied swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*). Numerous; flocks of them were seen flying over the marshes near Kissimmee Bay and along the western shore.

9. The purple martin (*Progne purpurea*). Was abundant in the pine woods near the Kissimmee above, though none were seen near the lake.

10. White-eyed vireo (*Vireo noveboracensis*). Common in the cypress belt, wherever there was a thick undergrowth. Its peculiar note was the one most frequently heard.

11. Savannah sparrow (*Passerculus savanna*). Not numerous.

12. Cardinal bird (*Cardinalis Virginianus*). We missed the pleasing song of this bright songster as soon as we left the live-oaks upon the Kissimmee, but after we

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had emerged from the desolate marshes and gained the first maple island their notes fell upon our ears; not numerous.

13. "Chewink" (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*). Upon the Kissimmee I saw them in abundance, and a few upon the dry sand of Lookout Island, scratching among the dead leaves. I also detected the local variety, or species, discovered by Mr. Maynard on the St. Johns, having the iris white instead of hazel.

14. Cow black-bird (*Molothrus pecoris*). Not so numerous as the red-wing.

15. Red-winged blackbird (*Agelæus phœniceus*). Very abundant. Everywhere seen in the marshes, enlivening us with their presence and song.

16. Meadow lark (*Sturnella ludoviciana*). The pine woods near the Kissimmee contained this species in abundance, but none were observed near the lake, owing to the swampy character of the shore.

17. Purple grakle (*Quiscalus purpureus*). Very numerous, this and the Florida species, *Q. baritus*.

18. Boat-tail grakle (*Quiscalus major*). Extremely abundant, associating in flocks with the red-wings and purple grakles.

19. Common crow (*Corvus Americanus*). Very few seen.

20. Fish crow (*Corvus ossefragus*). Abundant everywhere; made sad havoc with the eggs in heron rookeries wherever we landed.

21. Blue jay (*Cyanurus cristatus*). None seen; few heard on the east shore.

22. Pewee (*Sayorius fuscus*). Very few seen in the larger hammocks.

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23. Kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*). Comparatively abundant along the Kissimmee and all sides of the lake.

24. Chuckwill's widow (*Antrostomus Carolinensis*). A few heard at the deserted Indian village on the east shore.

25. Ivory bill woodpecker (*Picus principalis*). None satisfactorily identified, though I caught a glimpse of several which I then thought to be this species.

26. Pileated woodpecker (*Hylotomus pileatus*). Abundant; its noisy, rattling note could be heard in all the cypress belts.

27. Red-bellied woodpecker (*Centurus Carolinas*). Numerous; the most abundant of the *picidæ* here, as well as all over Florida.

28. Golden-winged woodpecker, (*Colaptes auratus*). Not numerous.

29. Paroquet (*Conurus Carolinensis*). Few flocks seen. Along the upper portion of our route on the Kissimmee they were abundant. I think they breed in the cypress belt of the east shore.

30. Turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*). Seen everywhere sailing high over the lake, or suddenly flapping out of some thick cypress.

31. Black vulture (*Cathartes atratus*). Rare.

32. Caracara eagle (*Polyborus Brasiliensis*). Not numerous. Regarding this species, and the sacred vulture of Bartram, I shall have some notes in a future number.

33. *Falco sparrerius*, (sparrow-hawk). Abundant along the Kissimmee; rare on the lake.

34. *Buteo lineatus* (red-shouldered hawk). Most numerous species, having young in nearly every large collection of trees.

35. Fish-hawk (*Pandion halietus*). Everywhere

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abundant in the lake. None of the white-headed eagle were seen in the whole trip, though the osprey had nests everywhere.

36. Barred owl (*Symium nebulosum*). Numerous; young found a week old. Its hootings filled the air every night.

37. Great horned owl (*Bubo Virginianus*). Saw none, but heard several.

38. Wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*). The shore of the lake is not suited to the habits of the turkey, though we saw feathers at the old Indian camps, probably brought there from the hammocks above on the Kissimmee, where it is comparatively abundant.

39. Quail (*Ortyx Virginianus*). None seen on the lake, though bevies met with above.

40. Killdee plover (*Ægialitis vociferus*). Abundant on the Kissimmee; none seen on the lake.

41. Snipe (*Gallinago Wilsoni*). Abundant on Kissimmee.

42. Yellow-legs (*Gambetta flavipes*). Very numerous on the Kissimmee.

43. Red-breasted snipe (*Macrorhamphus griseus*). Abundant at the ford on the Kissimmee.

44. Sand-hill crane (*Grus Canadensis*). But one seen on Okeechobee; abundant on the prairie of the Kissimmee.

45. Clapper rail (*Rallus crepitans*). Many heard; none seen.

46. Purple gallinule (*Gallinula Martinica*). Not numerous; in the lily pads of the lake border.

47. Coot (*Fulica Americana*). Abundant.

48. Louisiana heron (*Demigretta ludoviciana*). Not very abundant.

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49. Snowy heron (*Garzetta candidissima*). Not numerous.

50. White heron (*Herodias egretta*). Very numerous. Along the river and in several places in the lake I found them breeding in large numbers. The eggs were laid about February 15th and 20th; no young then hatched.

51. Great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*). Abundant; not near so many as of white; breeding.

52. Blue heron (*Florida cærulea*). Not common.

53. Least bittern (*Ardetta exilis*). Rarely seen.

54. Green heron (*Butorides virescens*). Very plentiful, and breeding.

55. Night heron (*Nycticorax griseus*). Common.

56. White ibis (*Ibis alba*). Exceedingly numerous, especially along the river. They had not commenced breeding to all appearances.

57. Roseate spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*). Two pairs found breeding on an island in the lake; several seen there. The Indians say they breed abundantly on Fish-eating Creek.

58. Crying bird (*Aramus giganteus*). Very numerous along the Kissimmee and western lake shore. Eggs had been taken a month before our arrival, February 22d, according to a resident on the river.

59. Green-wing teal. Abundant along the Kissimmee.

60. Wood duck (*Aix sponsa*). The most abundant, in fact the only resident species I saw on the lake. They were apparently breeding, as they were occupying holes in the dead cypress of the east shore.

61. Florida cormorant (*Graculus Floridanus*). Abundant, and breeding on the shore bordering the Ever-

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glades. The custard apple trees there were filled with their newly built nests.

62. Snake bird (*Plotus anhinga*). The most abundant species, with the exception of the white heron, on the lake or river. It had both eggs and young as early as February 23d; everywhere abundant. No mammals were seen about the lake, and signs only of rabbit and raccoon. Deer occurred on the Kissimmee prairie, but in small numbers.

Game and fish are abundant in the vicinity of St. Augustine during the winter. Besides English snipe, the brown-winged curlew, mallard ducks, blue and green-winged teal, there are the summer duck, spoonbill, widgeon, shag-pole, sprig-tail, black-head, blue-head, English diver, canvas-back, and the raft duck, which is found only in salt water. These ducks infest the rivers in thousands, and are considerably hunted. The sportsmen do not exhibit a great amount of desire to fish, although fish are plentiful and large. Not long since, a number of boys, while casting their fishing lines from off the old fort battery here, hooked several large channel bass, the largest one weighing as high as thirty-four pounds. Trout also are freely caught. Then there is the mullet, whiting, black-fish, sheepshead, and other varieties, all in season. The oysters which line the river banks are delicious, and are gathered without any difficulty and to any amount. We recently gathered a good mess just along the city sea wall, not fifty yards from the streets. The deer, wild turkey, and bear, are successfully hunted in close proximity to St. Augustine. The hotels are kept in bountiful supply with venison and wild turkey, killed by our old hunters. One of them, and undoubtedly the most experienced in the

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neighborhood, is John Canova. He tells us the game is handy, especially the deer. The bear is hunted but little, as few or no good bear dogs are to be brought into requisition. When they are available the bear is then molested, and very often old bruin succumbs. Mr. Canova, while in the woods alone one day the past summer, encountered a monster black bear. His "old reliable" double-barrel gun was convenient, and Mr. Bear quietly expired. Its weight was 400 pounds. Sportsmen hunt considerably some few miles south of here, on the Halifax river, as they like the idea of spending a few weeks of camp life. They general go by way of the Matanzas river, running south about twenty-five miles; thence they are hauled—boat and all—over a strip of land nine miles in width to the Halifax river.

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VI.

GAME FISH OF FLORIDA.

I HAD always supposed that the fishes of the northern coasts were of better quality than those of southern waters, but an experience of three winters on the east coast of Florida has convinced me of my error. In a day's fishing at Mosquito Inlet, on the Indian river, we often took six or eight species of edible fish, all of which were quite equal to those of the North. They are also very abundant, and not being much pursued are easily caught. This is particularly the case in the Indian river, where the angler might say—

> "They are so unacquainted with man,
> Their tameness is shocking to me."

The Indian river country is mostly wilderness, and can only be fished and hunted by camping out, which, however, in a Florida winter, is delightful, the weather being much like the finest October days in the Northern States. At New Smyrna, near the Mosquito Inlet, there is also good fishing, and there is an excellent hotel, kept by E. K. Dowd (the Ocean House), mostly frequented by anglers and hunters from the North. Here you are near the fishing grounds, and behind the house stretches away to the south an immense forest and swamp, containing bears, panthers, deer, wild

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cattle, turkeys, quails, squirrels, and all kinds of ducks and water fowl. The house is clean, the table very good, the host and hostess obliging and friendly, and the charges moderate—about $14 per week. The route is as follows: From Savannah, by rail, to Jacksonville, ten or twelve hours; fare, $8. From Jacksonville to Enterprise, on the St. John, per steamer in two days; two hundred miles; fare, $9. At Enterprise you hire a wagon to take you through the pine woods thirty or forty miles to New Smyrna; time, twelve hours; perhaps more if the swamps are full of water; fare, $7. You can employ a day or two at Enterprise (Brock House), in fishing for black bass (here called trout) in Lake Munroe, or in hunting deer or wild turkeys in the woods. The expenses of a trip to Florida will be from $100 to $150 per month, according to the habits of the traveller.

During parts of three winters spent in this region I made some notes of the food and game fishes, from which I have prepared the following sketches:

Sheepshead (*Sargus ovis*). Dekay.—This is one of the most abundant species, as well as one of the most valuable as food. Though much more numerous than on the coasts of the Middle States, they are of smaller size, averaging, at Mosquito Inlet and in the Indian river, about three pounds. A six-pound fish is large, and a seven-pound one is rare. The baits generally used are clams (better boiled, being tougher), crabs, fiddlers, and conchs. The latter bait is very tough, well resists the strong teeth of the sheepshead, but is, I think, less attractive than the others. We find the best fishing usually in the channels which run along the banks, upon which is a thick grove of mangrove bushes;

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the roots of these are in the water, and are covered with barnacles, which attract the sheepshead. From half flood to high water they usually bite most eagerly, though here, as elsewhere, there sometimes comes a day on which fish do not feed—affected, probably, by the wind or weather.

I am disposed to believe, with Norris, that the sheepshead found on the northern coast are the surplus production of more southern waters. In April, the sheepshead on the coast of Florida become heavy with spawn, and lose their fine flavor. I think they spawn in May. We often take them quite small, only a few ounces in weight. Most fishermen use a hand line, with two hooks resting on the bottom, but anglers find more sport in the use of rod and reel. A four-pound sheepshead will make a strong fight, and a pair of them will try the angler's skill to save both. Owing to the hard pavement of enamelled teeth in the mouth, it is difficult to hook this fish, and when hooked his jaws are so strong that few hooks can resist their power. After trying many kinds I have found but two that I could depend upon. One is the hook used at Newport for tautog, and the other is figured in Norris' book under the name of the Virginia hook. It is the best of the two, having a sharp cutting edge to the barb, which gives a better penetration. Sinkers of different weights are required to suit the force of the tide at different times, the sheepshead being a bottom fish. Two, four, and six ounces will be found sufficient. We usually averaged a dozen fish to a line in one tide, even when half a dozen persons were fishing from the boat, most of whom were unskilled. I have taken twenty-five sheepshead in a tide to my own rod, and I have known two

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anglers to kill a hundred in a day. We used generally to fill a two-bushel bag, hanging over the boat's side in the water, so as to bring the fish home alive, and then put them in a car anchored in the creek in front of the hotel.

RED-FISH, OR CHANNEL BASS (*Corvina ocellata*). CUVIER.—This is a very common and numerous species on the Florida coasts, and is a fish much resembling in habits its congener, the striped bass of more northern waters. It is taken with similar baits, such as shrimp, crab, or a piece of mullet; it fights long and hard on the hook, and in the proper season is an excellent table fish, boiled, cut in steaks, and broiled, or even fried. I consider it, after the month of March, to be equal to the striped bass. In the fall and winter the red-fish is lean and without flavor, but improves in March, and in January it is the best of the coast fishes, as well as the most abundant. At that season it swarms in the river mouths and sounds, and can be taken with almost any bait. It is also found of large size in the surf on the sea-beaches, and can be readily taken by casting a baited hook with a hand line from the shore.

Norris represents the red-fish as "stringy, and lacking flavor," while Herbert calls it excellent. Both are right, since its quality varies with the season. Mr. Norris, quoting Holbrook, describes the red-fish as of a beautiful silvery color, and iridescent when taken from the water, adding that in the Gulf they are invariably red. I have found that specimens under seven or eight pounds' weight have the back of a steel-blue, sides golden, and belly white—the larger fish are of a brilliant golden red on back and sides. All have the black spot near the tail, from which the specific name is derived. Some-

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times there are two or more spots. The cut in Norris' book gives a correct figure of the red-fish, or channel bass. It comes into the rivers with the tide, and is best taken in the channel near the shore at half flood. As in sheepshead fishing, most persons use the hand line, with the bait on the bottom, but I have found better sport with a brass rod and reel to hold sixty or seventy yards of line, using a float to keep my bait within three feet of the bottom. The same hook as for striped bass; this fish has a tough, but not very bony mouth, and is easily hooked and held. In March and April we get them in the rivers and inlets of from five to ten pounds weight; later in the season of larger size, say from fifteen to thirty pounds. My largest was taken by trolling with a hand line from a boat in the Indian river, and weighed twenty-five pounds. I have known a dozen to be taken by one rod in the spring, averaging eight pounds, but in summer a wagon load could be hauled out of the surf with a hand line almost anywhere along the coast from Mosquito Inlet to the Indian river.

SALT-WATER TROUT (*Otolitus Carolinensis*). CUVIER.—This belongs to the same genus as the weak-fish, or squeteague of the Middle States (*O. regalis*), differing chiefly in this, that the southern species has rows of black spots on the back, like the lake trout of the Adirondacks, which it much resembles in figure. It is, however, not a salmon, but rather allied to the perches of the order *Ctenoid*, of Agassiz. Our southern species is not much esteemed as food, becoming soft and flavorless soon after capture. It is a game fish, and affords good sport to the rod fisher; a very handsome and lively fish, from two to ten pounds in weight, and is taken usually with mullet bait. It is of very rapacious

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habits, and on a still night in spring and summer the snapping of their jaws may be distinctly heard as they chase the mullets and small fry in the creeks. Holbrook gives a good figure of this species.

THE DRUM (*Pogonias cromis*). CUVIER. (*P. fasciatus*). HOLBROOK.—There seem to be two species on the southern coast. *Pogonias cromis* is the black drum, the larger and coarser, sometimes weighing fifty or sixty pounds. *P. fasciatus*, the striped drum, of ten or twelve pounds, is the better fish. They appear at Mosquito Inlet about April, and spawn, I think at that season. The roe of the drum, salted, is a favorite dish on the coast, and was formerly exported in large quantities to Cuba. In Charleston, Savannah, and St. Augustine the drum is the common dinner fish when in season, though I think it much inferior to the sheepshead or the red-fish. It is taken in the same way as its cousin, the sheepshead, and with the same bait, and behaves in the same way when hooked, though from its greater size and strength its capture is more difficult. This fish derives its name from its habit of emitting a hollow, drumming noise, principally, I think, in the spawning season. This sound, like the drumming of the partridge, is difficult to trace, as it appears to diffuse itself in space.

THE WHITING, BARB, OR KINGFISH (*Umbrina nebulosa*). STORER.—The whiting is considered one of the best of the southern fishes, and is prized higher by the natives than even the sheepshead ; perhaps because it is a scarcer fish. We seldom get more than six or eight of them in a tide. The flesh is both rich and delicate, and the average weight about a pound ; but its resistance is greater than would be expected from the size of the fish. They are taken in rather deep water on the

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bottom, with either clam, crab, or mullet bait. The figure in Norris' book is accurate.

RED SNAPPER, OR GROUPER (*Serranus erythogaster*). CUVIER.—This fish seems to be called by both names in different localities. In East Florida it goes by the name of "snapper," and is known by the large canine teeth and by its rapacious habits; when put with other fish alive in a car it proceeds to devour those smaller than itself. It has large scales, with spines in the dorsal fin, and has been placed by Cuvier among the perches. At Mosquito Inlet they are small—from one to three pounds, but in the Indian River Inlet I have taken them of ten or twelve pounds' weight, and I have seen them brought in from the Gulf of double that size. The snapper seems to be a wary fish, and requires finer tackle and more careful fishing than most of the coast species. I have found that a *rather small hook, fine line,* with mullet bait cast from a reel, using a float so as to let the line run off down the current thirty or forty yards from the boat, was the most successful way to delude the snapper. It bites sharply, fights hard, and is good eating, either boiled or fried. Color, reddish brown on the back and sides, growing darker after death; belly silvery. Holbrook, in his figure of this fish, gives it rows of black spots on the back.

BLACK GROUPER (*Serranus nigritus*). HOLBROOK.—Commonly known on the Florida coast as the "grouper"; it is a perch also, and is of the very best quality on the table, being rich and well flavored—a better fish than the preceding, in my opinion. It is shaped something like the black bass of fresh water, the color an olive brown, with dark mottled lines, resembling tortoise shell. At Mosquito Inlet it is taken from

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two to eight pounds in weight, with mullet bait, on the bottom. The grouper has a stronghold under the mangrove bushes, or in a hole in the bank, to which it retreats when hooked, and being a vigorous fish often succeeds in reaching its fortress, from which it can with difficulty be dislodged, and the loss of fish and tackle is the result. More hooks are lost by the grouper than by any other fish, but as it affords good sport and excellent food, it is a favorite object of the angler's pursuit. A bass rod and reel, with a strong line and Virginia hook, with lead enough to keep the bait on the bottom, is the best rig for the grouper, and, after all, the prospect of getting him is uncertain. He fights so hard that you have to give him line, and if you give him too much he is sure to escape into his hold.

COBIA, CRAB-EATER, OR SARGEANT FISH (*Elacate Atlanticus*). CUVIER.—This fish I have never seen, except in the Indian river, where it is a common species, lying under the mangrove bushes in wait for prey like a pike, which it much resembles in form, and in the long under-jaw, full of sharp teeth. It derives its trivial name from a black stripe running along its silvery sides from head to tail, like that on the trowsers of a sergeant. I found it rather coarse and indifferent food, in that also resembling the fresh-water pike. Size from two to three feet long.

THE POMPANO (*Bothrolæmus pampanus*). HOLBROOK.—Most persons who have been in Mobile or New Orleans have heard of the pompano. Perhaps few have seen or tasted it, though it has the reputation of being the finest fish in the world, and brings in the southern markets three or four times the price of any other fish. It is a rare fish, which may in part account for its high

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reputation, though having had the good fortune to catch and eat a pompano in Florida I am prepared to admit its claims for merit of the highest order. Holbrook is the only writer who, to my knowledge, gives a scientific description of this fish, and he apparently confounds it with the cavalli or crevallè, which much resembles it in appearance. In his "Fishes of South Carolina," he heads his description "The Pompano, *Bothrolæmus pampanus*. Synonyms—*Lichia Carolina*, (Dekay and Storer;) *Trachinotus pampanus* (Cuvier and Val); vulgo, cavalli or crevallè; known in New Orleans as pompynose."—Page 11.

The fish known on the coast of Florida as the cavalli or crevallè, I take to be *Caraux defensor* (Dekay), which belongs to the same family as *B. pampanus*, but is of different habits and merit, and has important structural distinctions.

The pompano has a truncated snout, rather a small mouth without teeth, jaws strong and massive, eye of moderate size, body much compressed and deep, about one-third the length; first dorsal fin represented by six spines; second dorsal soft and extending to the tail; anal fin extending to the tail also. The pompano is a bottom fish, and is found singly. My specimen was taken in the Hillsboro river, near New Smyrna, with clam bait, while fishing on the bottom for sheepshead. It weighed only two and a half pounds, but made so furious a resistance that I thought I had a large sheepshead hooked foul. It ran in circles, darted under the boat, fouled our lines, and made fuss enough for a fish of three times it size. As soon as our boatman saw it he shouted, "A pompano! and the first I ever saw caught with a hook in this river!" This man had fished on the

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coast all his life, and knew every fish in the waters. He had been with us when we caught the cavalli in the Indian river, and named both species at once. My specimen was a splendid creature. His colors were as brilliant as those of a fresh-water salmon, but instead of bright silver he was like a bar of frosted silver. This changed after death, to dark blue above and lemon-yellow beneath. We had him cut in slices and fried, and even under that treatment, which I suspect was not the most appropriate, he was superb. A combination of richness and delicacy of flavor quite unique—like a New Brunswick salmon and Lake Superior whitefish, which, of all the fishes on this Continent, I hold to be the best.

This specimen measured eighteen inches long and six in depth.

THE CAVALLI, or CREVALLÈ (*Caraux defensor*). DEKAY.—Belongs to the same family as the last, and much resembles it in appearance. The cavalli has a more pointed head and snout, with moderately large conical and pointed teeth. The mouth is larger than in the pompano, the body not as deep in proportion to the length, the eye is larger, has two dorsal fins, and at the junction of the tail with the body it is smaller than the pompano. In color it is olive green, and silvery above and yellow beneath. I found it quite numerous at the Indian River Inlet. It goes in schools, swims near the surface, and takes readily a trawl, either bait or red rag. It is an active, sporting fish, but of indifferent quality on the table, being dry and tasteless, like the dolphin of tropical seas. Those I caught were of about two pounds' weight, but I am told that it grows to five times that size.

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It would appear that these two species, from their strong resemblance to each other, are often confounded, and I think it very probable that specimens of the pompano reported to have been taken this year in Buzzard's Bay were in reality cavalli, this being a more roving as well as a more numerous species than the pompano.

BLACKFISH, OR SEA BASS (*Centropistes nigricans*). CUVIER.—This seems to be the same species which is known in New York as the sea bass, and at Newport as the blackfish. Like the sheepshead, those in northern waters are much larger than we find them in Florida waters, so that I am inclined to believe that they breed here and go North in the summer. At Mosquito Inlet, they are very abundant, and being voracious feeders can be taken almost at will, and with any bait. Usually under a pound, while off the reefs at Newport I had taken them of six or seven.

SAILOR'S CHOICE, OR HOGFISH (*Hemulon falvomaculatus*). DEKAY; CROKER (*Micropogon undulatus*). CUVIER; BLACK GRUNT (*Hemulon arcuatum*). HOLBROOK; SKIP JACK, YOUNG OF BLUEFISH (*Temnodon saltator*). LINN.—The above are small pan fish, which can be taken in vast numbers in the bays and creeks, but the larger species being numerous few persons seek for these, though they are all nice eating. The fullgrown bluefish are numerous on some parts of the coast at certain seasons, as I am informed, as are also the Spanish mackerel, but I have never met with them.

MULLET (*Magil lineatus*). DEKAY.—I think there are several species of the mullet here. They are found everywhere in the bays and sounds in immense shoals, and are taken in seines and cast nets in size from half a

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pound to six pounds. It is a very valuable fish to the inhabitants, since it takes salt better than any other southern species, being equal to the mackerel in that respect. It also furnishes a valuable food in its spawn, which is salted and smoked. It is also used extensively as bait for most other fishes. The mullet appears to subsist upon the minute animals found in the mud, with which substance its stomach and intestines are usually found to be filled. Eaten fresh, the mullet affords a rich and savory food.

SALT-WATER CATFISH (*Galeichthys marinus*). CUVIER.—Much resembles the fresh-water catfish, but is a handsomer fish, both in form and color. It has the barbels dependent from the mouth, and strong spines in the pectoral and dorsal fins, capable of inflicting painful wounds upon careless hands. As to its value as an edible species, I cannot say; they are numerous, and greedy biters, but are generally thrown away, or left for the coons and buzzards. Size in the Indian river, ten or twelve pounds.

SHARKS AND THEIR CONGENERS.—Sharks are very numerous in these waters, from six to nine feet long—probably the mackerel shark, *Lamna punctata*—Storer. There is a species here called the nurse shark, *Somniosus boeirpinna*, De S., which is sometimes taken with a hook; it is about five or six feet long, and its teeth are very small.

Other members of this family are the garfish, angel fish, rays, skates, etc. The garfish, *Pristis antiquorum* (Dekay), is shark-like in form, with a cruel weapon projecting from its snout one-third the length of its body. This is studded with sharp spines on either side, and is used to kill other fishes. The sawfish has a large

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mouth, but no teeth in it, so he slashes his saw among a school of mullets, killing half a dozen at a blow, which he then gobbles up at his leisure. He is dreaded by fishermen, who disable him by a blow on the saw.

The angel-fish is a very bad angel indeed, judging from his appearance, which is between a shark and a ray—a hideous combination.

The rays or skates belong also to this class, and they are of large size and numerous on this coast, particularly the sting ray, *Trygon hastata* (Storer), which is a terror to fishermen. In wading to cast their nets they are in danger of treading on this creature, which lurks in the mud or on the sandy bottom, and when touched strikes with his terrible barbed weapon, making ragged wounds so difficult to heal that they are popularly supposed to be poisoned. These rays are often six feet long, including the tail, and three feet across. They appear to live upon the small mollusks so numerous in these waters. I have seen a ray, when hauled ashore, disgorge a pint or more of these small bivalves.

The torpedo ray, or crawfish, is also found on this coast, which animal carries with him an electrical battery of 250,000 plates as described by naturalists, capable of giving a very severe shock to the incautious fisherman.

Cephaloptera vampirus. MITCHELL.—The great ray, vampire of the ocean, or devil-fish, is found also in these waters, although it seldom enters the rivers. This is often fifteen feet in length, and the same in breadth, and is strong enough to drag off a small vessel, when it becomes entangled with the cable, as sometimes happens. In Charleston harbor they are pursued in whale-boats, and captured with harpoons, affording great

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sport. In Victor Hugo's romance, the name devil-fish, which belongs to this ray, is wrongly bestowed upon the octopus, or cuttle-fish. This great ray, when propelling itself through the water with its immense pectoral fins, which look like the wings of a bat, is a wonderful sight. On its head are two horns, which, with its long tail, complete the resemblance to his satanic majesty. This is a fish, and the cuttle is not.

I hear often from the natives of two large and valuable fishes of these waters, which, from their great size and activity, are seldom caught—the jew-fish and the tarpum. The jew-fish seems to be a near relative of the grouper, and to belong, like it, to the perch family. It is a short, thick-set fish, with large fins, and looks like a giant black bass or a tautog; color, olive brown; scales small, head large, with well developed mouth and numerous small teeth. The first dorsal fin has eleven spines; second dorsal, soft; anal fin long, like the esocidæ. When hooked it runs for a hole, like a grouper. Specimens have been taken in these waters on a shark line, which weighed two or three hundred pounds, so that I think it must be the larger of the percoids. The flesh is rich and well flavored, and as I have only seen this one specimen in four winters' fishing here, I think it must be a rare fish.

The tarpum I have not seen. It also is rare, and is described to belong to the mackerel family, growing to the weight of 80 to 100 lbs. A surface fish, very active and strong, with brilliant silvery scales the size of a dollar. It is rarely taken with hook and line, as it generally carries away the tackle, however strong. It goes in schools, and leaps from the water when struck, either with hook or spear. The only successful way of

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killing the tarpum, I am told, is to strike it with a harpoon, to which is attached by a strong line a small empty cask; the fish, by struggling with this buoy, exhausts itself so that it may be approached in a boat and killed with a lance. I lately hooked a mysterious fish or fishes (for the same thing happened to me three times within an hour) which ran out 50 or 60 yards of line with a single dash, and then breached on the surface, taking away my hooks. It was so strong and swift that in trying to check it a thumbstall of thick buckskin was cut through by the line as if by a knife, and my thumb burned by the friction. This was either a shovel-nosed shark, which runs off in this way, not turning like a common shark, or a tarpum, and as a school of these fishes has been often seen near the spot where I hooked my fish, I am inclined to think it was this species which I then encountered. The rush was more like that of a fresh run salmon than of any other fish I know, except that this one did not leap out of the water like the salmon.

Not having access to any works on icthyology, I am unable to give the scientific names of these fishes. They are mentioned under the above names by Captain Romans, who wrote a "Concise Natural History of Florida," about 1773. New York anglers, who kill 30 or 40 lbs. striped bass with the rod, would find in the jew-fish and tarpum foemen worthy of their steel.

The variety of species which one meets with in these waters in a few days' fishing, while it adds much to the variety and interest of the sport, causes a great loss of hooks and lines.

Perhaps you rig with small hooks for pigfish or whiting, and a red-fish of twenty pounds takes away your

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hooks; or you are fishing with larger tackle for redfish and a giant ray takes your hooks to the bottom and stays there, or a furious shark of 200 lbs. cuts off your line at the first turn he makes. I succeeded in capturing a nurse shark five or six feet long, with rod and reel. This is a shark of rather sluggish habits (whence its name, *Somniosus brevipenna*), with teeth too small to allow it to cut off the line. After 15 or 20 minutes' play it was gaffed by our boatman.

THE FRESH-WATER FISHES OF FLORIDA.—Of these I have less knowledge than of the sea fishes. The species most widely diffused, and also the most valued, is the black trout, or bass (*Grystes salmoides*). This species is also found in the western lakes and rivers, but in Florida it grows to a larger size; specimens of eight, ten, and twelve pounds being sometimes taken. The native method is with a bob, which is a bunch of gay-colored feathers, with two or three large hooks concealed in it. This is fastened to a yard or two of strong line, and this to a stout reed pole. The fisherman sits in the bow of a canoe, which is paddled by one in the stern, and kept at such a distance from the weedy shore that the bob may be skittered along the margin. Out rushes the bass, and cannot well escape being hooked; he is either hauled in by main force, or breaks away. Northern fishermen use the spoon, or sometimes cast with a long line and gaudy flies. Once on the Upper St. Johns, near the Everglades, two of us took, with spoons, trawling from the stern of a steamer, twenty or thirty black bass in an hour or two; they were from two to six pounds weight. Parties who go out from Enterprise upon Lake Munroe in small boats often bring in great strings of bass.

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In the lakes and rivers are also found the yellow perch, *P. flavescens* (Cuvier); sunfish, *Pomotis vulgaris* (Cuvier); blue bream, *Ichthetis incisor* (Val.); red-bellied perch, *Ichthetis rubicanda* (Storer); goggle-eyed perch, *Pomoxis rhomboides* (Linn).

S. C. CLARKE.

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VII.

THREE MONTHS IN FLORIDA FOR A HUNDRED DOLLARS.

IT is a pity that people other than rich, should be afflicted with sickness or devices that spring from a craving for a change of climate. So wide a difference exists between the climatic conditions of the Northern States and those of the southernmost, that it is quite practicable for one possessed of means to remedy any defect in his constitution, pulmonarily, if this expression be allowable, merely by a change of residence. It is so well known that it needs no further showing, that consumption, that scourge of the North, can be cured (if not radically, at least its fatal consequences postponed), if the patient is taken in hand in the early stages of the disease, and treated to a dose of the bland and health-renewing climate of Florida. It is so well known that thousands seek, and gain, relief by a temporary residence in that land of the "Fountain of Youth."

Perhaps that term, "the Land of the Fountain of Youth" has not already been used several thousand times; but no matter, it is very telling, when one would attract the attention by the use of sonorous phrases. But Florida deserves all such flattering titles as the above, and that of the "Land of Flowers," no matter how much her defamers may say to the contrary. There are thou-

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sands more who would be but too glad to avail themselves of the advantages accruing from the winter's stay there, could they but afford it. Consumption is so insidious in its approach that its victim is lulled by a fatal sense of security to postpone the day of departure until too late, and he departs only for the shadowy land. Any well-informed physician can prognosticate the result at a sufficiently early stage of the disease to warn the patient, and then—then only, is the time to profit by the knowledge, and leave a place of death for a country of health.

To those who are suffering, who are hesitating, dreading the annoyance and expense incident to a voyage to Florida; feeling that they would rather face the certain dangers of another winter at the North, I address myself. To another class of citizens the information to be given here will not come amiss—to those who, though in good health and strength, have unsatisfied longings for the game region of the South. It cannot be denied that many sportsmen suffer from a plentiful lack of money, and any suggestion tending to furnish a moderate supply of game at slight expenditure will be acceptable. To them, then, as well as to the invalid, the following notes may be of service; though in fact, as may be expected, the invalid will drop his rôle of sick man and assume that of sportsman, at an early period of his stay in a land whose climate is so gloriously rejuvenating as that of Florida.

To fulfil the expectations aroused by my announcement at the head of this paper to treat one to a three-months' trip to Florida for a hundred dollars, I must assume that the tourist be tolerably strong, and able to endure a sea voyage in a sailing vessel. Fifteen dollars will cover the cost of a "cabin" passage from New York to Jacksonville, in Florida. Fifteen dollars and two weeks'

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time. Perhaps three weeks ; may not consume but eight days ; but two weeks is a fair average. Assume, then, that $15 is expended for passage down, twice fifteen (coming back) makes thirty dollars, leaving a balance of seventy dollars for other expenses for two months, one month supposed to have been passed on the briny deep. Regarding the joys and delights of an ocean voyage in winter, I remain silent ; that is a matter of taste, and individual taste does not come within the scope of this article. There are people who revel in the beauties of an ocean storm ; who climb out upon the bowsprit as the vessel rises and falls, to get the full benefit of the plunge. To such, a trip to Florida in a schooner would be unalloyed bliss, provided cabin accommodations were good, and "grub" well-cooked and varied. Again, there are those to whom the dreary monotony of sailing on and on is horrible, and to whom a storm but represents so much racking of bones, and so many dinners lost forever. These seek consolation within themselves, and draw upon their reserve fund of vitality fearfully.

Other routes are at the disposal of one not confined to a limited amount of cash, and for thirty-five dollars he can reach Florida by one of the many steamers that ply between New York and the South. These steamers run to Charleston and Savannah, and connect with other steamers that enter Florida. The accommodations are very good upon the majority of them, and the time consumed in the entire trip generally less than five days. All-rail routes there are, for those who dread the ocean, which make the distance in about a day less, and at a cost of about forty-five dollars. The most preferable route, in my opinion, is by steamer to Savannah, and thence by the new road direct to Jacksonville. Pro-

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vided time is not an object, the "inside route," among the sea-islands of Georgia, is very pleasant.

There are but three ports directly accessible by sailing vessel upon the east coast of Florida. Commencing with the northernmost, these are, Fernandina, Jacksonville, and New Smyrna. The two first named have a large lumber trade with the North, and frequent opportunities are offered for passage and freight upon the vessels engaged in the business. They go down light, in ballast, and are but too glad to receive any quantity of freight. This is why Jacksonville can furnish provisions, and nearly everything else, at New York prices.

Fernandina has many inducements to offer in the matter of out-door life. It has a magnificent ocean beach, pure air and delightful bays, harbors, creeks and rivers to sail and fish, close at home. In many things it out-ranks its lower neighbors, but in the way of game it cannot approach some places on the lower coast and St. Johns. It has direct rail communication with the west coast at Cedar Keys, fare about $7, and steamboat communication with Savannah and Charleston both the inside and outside lines. The town itself is orderly, pleasant, and well supplied with markets and stores.

As a place from which one may reach the most attractive portions of the State, Jacksonville should be selected. Situated upon the St. Johns, it has steam communication with every settlement upon that interesting river, and with St. Augustine, New Smyrna, and Indian river, upon the coast. It has direct rail connection with Tallahassee, the capital of the State, with Cedar Keys upon the west coast, and thence with all the Gulf ports, the keys, and Cuba, and with Savan-

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nah, *via* the old circuitous route, and a more direct new one. Being naturally so centrally and commandingly situated, drawing the trade and productions of the St. Johns, with its countless tributaries and lakes, it is the place of all places to obtain a first glimpse of Florida in its most flourishing condition. The climate of Jacksonville is not all that could be desired, for it does not possess that remarkable softness and warmth generally supposed to belong to Florida. It is subject to extremes of temperature, and in winter will chill a sensitive invalid to the bones with its nocturnal frosts. It has much that is desirable, however, in its bright warm days, and possesses a grand birthright in the St. Johns alone. Here the camper-out had better procure his outfit, except tent and personal effects. From Jacksonville to Enterprise, 200 miles up the St. Johns, the fare by steamer is $12, and of proportionable price to intervening landings. To Salt Lake, the farthest point reached by steamers (curious stern-wheelers), it is about $6 more; all freight at the rate of about $1 per barrel; a small boat up the St. Johns pays $5 for passage upon the steamers. Indian river, the great game section, is reached *via* Salt Lake, from the St. Johns, the distance across land at that point being but six miles.

New Smyrna, one hundred miles south of the mouth of the St. Johns, has more inducements in fish and game and real enjoyable camping life, but lacks the many conveniences of diet and travel that the other places possess. Few vessels visit it, and these for lumber, chartered by live-oak contractors. For a party in good health, with plentiful supplies, it is the best point one can choose for a few months' stay, when the object is merely to gain flesh and have a good time hunting and

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fishing. Two large lagoons, thirty miles in length, enter the ocean at this point, and *via* the south, or Mosquito lagoon, can be reached the famous Indian river.

St. Augustine, though claiming attention from its delightful climate and the interest attached to its ruins, is not especially referred to, as not being in direct communication with the North. It has small sailing vessels, as well as has New Smyrna, connecting it with Jacksonville, and a rail connection with the St. Johns, but is a dear place to visit.

When to go depends upon so many things that it is not an easy matter to advise correctly. If one wished merely to get rid of cold weather, then the first of December would be the time, being sufficiently early, and in season to catch a parting touch of the hot season. The months of January, February, and March are probably the best to spend in Florida; being the pleasantest there, as well as the most trying to the invalid at the North.

Perhaps a few facts as to climate will be pertinent to the subject, and are accordingly produced. By reference to my note book of three years ago I find that the temperature in January ranged from 28 to 80 deg.; was more equable in February and March, with less extremes, though growing warmer. The mean temperature of January was about 60 degrees. According to the only tables at present accessible, the mean temperature in Jacksonville, for January, for 20 years, was 55 degrees, for February, 58 degrees, and for March, 63 degrees. In Augustine, for the same time and months, the means were, respectively, 57, 59, and 63 degrees, thirty degrees warmer than the mean temperature of West Point dur-

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ing the same period and months. At Key West, the extreme southern port of Florida and our Union, the range of the thermometer was nine degrees higher. At New Smyrna the temperature is essentially modified, and on Indian river the change is much greater, temperature being several degrees warmer.

With the object in view of spending two or three months in Florida at an expenditure of no more than a hundred dollars, the only mode of living practicable will be in the open air. To many of our readers, whose camp-fires have gleamed in every corner of the Union, the proposition to camp in such a wild and delightful climate as that of Florida would be hailed as likely to give the "substance of things hoped for." Let those who wish, patronize the hotels at a monthly expense exceeding our total outlay for the winter's trip. Camping out, then, is to be the manner of living, and to do that successfully a tent is needed. If desired, this luxury can be dispensed with and a shelter constructed with the stalks and leaves of the palmetto. To one "handy" with an axe and knife, and an old campaigner, this house-building would be a small matter. It is assumed, however, that the party be ignorant of all that pertains to camp life, and needs to go provided with a shelter from the elements. Now tents can be bought in any variety, but what is really needed is—first, strength to withstand the weather, and the greatest amount of room consistent with weight and bulk. A tent, large enough for a party of four, with room for "traps," and provisions for two months, can be made at an expense of about $15, if made by the party, and of light, waterproof drilling. It should be about twelve feet long, with walls about four feet high,

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and slanting roof, with ridge-pole six or seven feet from the ground. Should be made so that it can be tightly closed at times. Fifteen dollars for a tent, and thirty dollars for passage down, amount to forty-five dollars already expended. Can we provision and provide for the welfare of the party with the remainder? Let us see.

After the tent-poles are cut, at the place of camping, which should be upon fresh ground, in a rather airy situation and tolerably near wood and water, the tent is pitched, and we have a habitation. If a party of four start together something is saved to each individual, as the labor and expense of freight, etc., is much less, borne individually. While one is driving tent-pins, and another cutting wood for fire, another can be preparing the food for cooking, while the fourth is hunting for the long Spanish moss (*Tillandsia*), for bedding. Provisions demand the first attention, and, in this matter alone, much will depend upon the tastes of the camper-out. Having but fifty odd dollars, and having many wants to supply, some very close skirmishing must ensue between actual and imaginary wants. It will be admitted that we must have pork. Without that the camper-out could hardly exist. It fries his potatoes (provided there be a fire), cooks his flapjacks (if he has any), and spatters and sizzles over a "light-wood" fire in a way that, in itself, is refreshing to a hungry hunter. Pork, then, must be taken, say fifty pounds; this may be enough and it may not; there may be an abundance of venison, when the pork will, of course, be consigned temporarily to solitary confinement; but the chances are, that pork will appear upon the table, or palmetto leaf, three times and more, a day. Pork $5; dry salted

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is best for transportation, and a coarse bag, denominated "gunny-bag," the best receptacle for it.

Flour, some persons may need to be told, is sometimes called the staff of life. That depends wholly where it is. In some places it is made of secondary importance to whiskey, and the true Floridian regards the fluid that cheers, likewise inebriates, as the real staff and mainstay of his existence. When the whiskey is gone he is gone. When the popularly known "staff" is gone, he can repair to the nearest hammock and cut a "palmeeter cabbage;" but no satisfactory substitute exists indigenous to Florida for the much-loved whiskey. Flour for one person, two months, sixty pounds. Better take the self-raising flour, either Hecker's or Jewell Brothers'; being in convenient packages, and ready for use by the addition of a little water, and a stick (not the metaphorical "stick"), it is much prized, and saves a great deal of labor. With the flour costing about $3, and a box of good crackers (better than flour, because always ready cooked), costing as much more, one will be prepared with all the farinaceous food he needs during his stay. A few pounds of meal, costing nothing worth calculating, should be added. A bushel or a barrel of good potatoes is necessary, and if those give out, sweet potatoes can be purchased at a dollar per bushel or less. Out upon the man who would exclude the potato as a luxury dispensable. We can afford it in the quantity desired, even with so small a balance remaining of our hundred dollars. Who does not remember the delicious, delicate, fragile conceptions of potatoes sliced and prepared at the highest class restaurants? At least, who does not remember reading of them? Two dollars fifty for potatoes, and as much more for coffee. Nothing so

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helps to strengthen one after a heavy tramp, or long hunt, as a cup of good coffee. Carry it whole, brown it in the frying-pan and pound it in a shot-bag with a axe. Thus it will be kept until needed, of refreshing strength and aroma. The condensed coffee is liked by some, and if it suits the taste, should be taken, as it saves much in bulk and preparation. A dollar more needs to be added for this substitute. A little sugar, of course, unless one prefers "long sweetening," which latter is more liable to loss, being un-pick-up-able when spilt. A dozen cans of condensed milk, costing about three dollars, will last a single person a long time. If this is taken, the sugar may be dispensed with ; if it is not, then take three dollars' worth of cut loaf sugar. In a land of sugar-cane one need not be without sweetening for his coffee. Salt and pepper, a few pickles, or pickled onions, and a little condensed beef, in all not exceeding three dollars ; to which may be added, very gratefully, a choice list of delicacies, but they will not be allowed in this bill, as we haven't got any further than the larder, and have expended sixty-eight dollars already. The indispensable cooking utensils are few. First, as the chief friend of the camper-out, is the frying-pan. Never omit it. Let it receive early attention. It should be a foot in diameter, well made of wrought iron, and with a *long* handle. The handle is especially marked *long* in italics for the benefit of the novice in cooking over an open fire.

Next in order is the bake kettle, an article once in use among our ancestors a hundred years ago, or so, in the good old times ; and to be found in every "cracker" family at the South at the present day. The camper-out cannot do without it. It should be at least a foot

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in diameter, and cost, with the frying-pan, not over $3. A quart tin cup, a tin plate, a knife and fork, and spoon, will be seen only to be appreciated by the knowing one. These may be duplicated, as the loss of either, though not wholly irreparable, might occasion discomfort. They cost but little, say a dollar or so. A sharp knife should be in camp, but we are not Yankees if we do not have a jack-knife in our pocket. An axe or hatchet should certainly be taken, say $1 for a hatchet. A few matches, candles, a little soap, salve for bruises, and liniment perhaps, should be taken, and two dollars will cover the whole bill.

As no extra expense is entailed in respect to clothing, nothing will be allowed for its purchase. If anything, there should be credit given for the amount saved by wearing old clothes the entire winter. Aim to dress comfortably, and be able at times to dress warmly. Take a good stock of old cast-off clothing, and remember to donate it when you leave, for the benefit of some one —you are sure to meet him—poorer than yourself. Wear woollen shirts and stockings, old trousers and boots, and light, broad-brimmed felt hat. Take one pair water-proof leather boots, but rely mainly upon easy fitting shoes. An old overcoat is most acceptable at times, for, though the temperature will rarely descend below 35 or 40 degrees, it will certainly, at times, reach to 28 degrees, and then the unprotected ones shiver. It is at night, however, that it is cold, and good blankets are necessary. At least one pair army blankets, costing about $6. Rubber blanket, or better, a good "poncho," costing $2. A mosquito net, or bar, of fine lawn or mosquito netting, is absolutely necessary, as mosquitoes and sand-flies fairly revel at times, and at

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such times—generally when the camper-out most desires repose—commit insufferable depredations. Make the bar of fine lawn or cotton cloth six feet long, four broad, and three high. This will shelter two persons, or ought to, and will cost about $2. A pocket compass is sometimes very valuable to one travelling in the woods, and as he will not want to remain at all times in close vicinage to camp, and as the faculty of direction is not generally sufficiently developed in an amateur to enable him to wander far into the swamps without getting lost, one had better be taken. Expend a few dollars in fish lines; good, strong bass lines and hooks, and some smaller ones for sheepshead and smaller fish. These, with the expense of freight, will take at least five dollars, making a total expense for the whole trip of ninety dollars. This leaves $10 for contingent expenses, which, by a judicious expenditure, may be made to conduce materially to the comfort of the camper-out. I flatter myself that the amount would not have remained had I not, by very careful calculation, reduced his wants to the minimum. Do not cast about for some means of spending this sum, though it may burn the pocket; it is best to retain a grip upon it, at least until the very last week of camping. By the addition of a few dollars one can secure a most convenient arrangement called a "camp kit," containing everything desirable for cooking in a small space. In a large pail is packed frying-pan, plates, knives, forks, etc.—in fact, everything necessary to the wants of a party of six, for the sum of a dozen dollars. And then there is the portable stove, which, weighing but little and small in compass, will prove a blessing in any camp. A kerosene stove is very convenient, but will necessitate carrying fuel, while for

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the camp stove, the fuel is at hand, only needing to be cut. I speak of these things lest any one should think me regardless of their comfort. It is possible that some desiderata may be omitted, but the main desires and wants, at least, are provided for. In provisions there may not be quite enough, but I think what I have enumerated will cover the wants of a winter's stay. Fish and game will very likely aid greatly in providing for your wants; but then fish are sometimes very perverse and will not bite, and turkeys, quail, and deer will persist in secluding themselves in inaccessible places. That ten dollars should be sufficient to cover all extra outlay for provisions. Now I expect some cavilling person will say, "You haven't provided gun or boat, nor many other things necessary to one's comfort in a land unknown to him."

I know that. I didn't agree to; merely promised to take you to Florida and back, giving a month on the water, two on land, for one hundred dollars. I have done more than that. I have provided for your wants for that period, not taking into consideration the fact that your bare board at the North would cost you twice the amount it will to camp. You haven't allowed for the value of the cooking utensils, blankets, etc., after they have served your purpose, and you do not consider, though it is true as gospel, that you have, if an ordinary man, saved at least half the expense of clothing a winter's residence at the North would necessitate. Really the trip to Florida has cost you nothing, and with a little more time and "figgerin'" I might perhaps show that you had made money by the venture. Anyway, you will come back with a renewed lease of life, and rejoicing in regained strength, which of themselves, are

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inestimable and incalculable. A gun, by all means, should be taken, and if the choice lies between shot gun and rifle, take the former. With a shot gun one can secure a greater variety of game than with a rifle, and should be able to supply the camp. Do not get a muzzle, if you can procure a breech-loader. There is no comparison between them, and it is universally conceded that the breech-loader surpasses in safety, and rapidity of loading and firing. There is little choice in the various kinds, except in price; they are all generally safe enough, and the choice of selection will depend mainly upon the length of the purchaser's purse. Rifles are of all prices, from the cheapest second-hand at $10 to the latest and best Remington. A revolver is sometimes useful, but not necessary, unless one is expert enough to kill small game with it. My word for it, there will be no occasion, unless one visits the wilder portions of Florida, for its use upon larger game, if I may except an infrequent chance at deer or turkey. Take a few steel or brass shells for the breech-loader, but let the bulk of them be paper, which, costing but $1 per hundred, can be thrown away after discharged, and thus much weight of carriage and annoyance avoided. By oiling them well they will not stick in the breech, and will prove everyway serviceable. Carry a quarter-keg (6¼ lbs.) of good powder, as it can be readily exchanged for other things, if not all needed. In shot, take three sizes: a few pounds of buck; ten pounds No. 2, and ten of No. 6 or 8. This will give sufficient variety without too great weight. If caps are taken, choose the best Eley's. The cheaper grade of water-proof, at about $1 per m., is good enough.

And now, if one would enjoy himself to the fullest

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extent, let him take a boat. Whether he camp on the coast or the St. Johns, he will find himself sadly at loss for means of conveyance, unless he has a boat of his own. Good boats are scarce in Florida, out of the cities, and cannot be obtained. It is not necessary that it be valuable or fast sailing, but it should combine safety with lightness and buoyancy. For merely coasting about the creeks and quiet portions of the inlets, a light boat, like a "dory," or gunning skiff, is all that is needed. But for more extended trips, a larger one, built upon the same pattern, is what is wanted. When not in use, it should be drawn upon the sand and covered with palmetto leaves to keep the sun from warping it. A coat of copper paint is necessary to prevent the worms, in the brackish waters of the coast, from riddling it with holes.

It is thought that everything is now provided for a three months' trip, and after a few words regarding the drawbacks to enjoyment to be met in Florida, as elsewhere, this paper will be brought to a close.

Of the many annoyances incident to a camp life in Florida, the insects take first rank. In fact, there are no other real causes for complaint. Mosquitoes undoubtedly take precedence of all others as the most bloodthirsty, persistent, and numerous. They cannot be entirely avoided, though they may be kept at bay by the use of a good mosquito bar, large enough to cover blankets and bedding at night; in the day time their depredations are confined to swamps and dark places. The sand-flies, which sometimes appear in clouds, bite like a bull-terrier, and sting like a red-hot iron. They will crawl into your hair, nose, ears, unless much care is used, and withal, are undesirable neighbors. They bite principally in early morning and evening, but are very

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uncertain, and put in an appearance when least expected or desired. The mosquito is bad, the sand-fly is worse, but neither can hold a candle (figuratively speaking), to the flea. In many things the flea, the wicked flea, is wholly unapproachable. He can jump farthest, hold his wind longest, and bite the cussedest of any members of his tribe. Of all things the most annoying, he holds on, hits hard, and his persecutions end only with his death. He is a regular hard-shell Baptist; and if there is no place of future punishment in his creed, his victim fervently hopes there is one for fleas. If one of these crustaceans take up his abode with you, it is for life, and should at once be hunted down. But the flea is not indigenous to Florida, as is well known, and he has no particular State for habitat, though dwelling only in certain places. If the camp be pitched in an old plantation, or near a family of crackers, where canine and porcine quadrupeds do abound, then look out for fleas. Camp on fresh ground, near no plantation, deserted or occupied; allow no dogs, hogs, or flea-haunted men near, and you may be exempt from their ravages. Should a flea obtain a lodgment in your garments (you will know it at once), lose no time in doffing your clothes and instituting a thorough and vigorous search. Remain out a week rather than carry him to camp. These are extreme measures, not recommended—only suggested.

Scorpions sometimes alarm the camper by suddenly appearing from under an overturned piece of bark, or perhaps from under a blanket. They are not very common, and their sting, though painful, is not fatal. There is no danger from them unless suddenly grasped or confined in the clothing. They are very disagreeable visitors, however, and one that I happened to take in my

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hand once, gave a rude shock to my nerves, though it did not bite. 'Tis said that salt and vinegar, or ammonia, are antidotes, placed upon the sting. As preventives for bites of mosquitoes take tar and oil and smear the face and hands, though there is a feeling against such a remedy. Ammonia is recommended, though of little use. Fear of snakes is almost wholly groundless. Though many varieties exist in Florida, there are but two to be feared, the moccasin and rattlesnake. The former is in great abundance in the swamps, though the rattlesnake is not common. Both are exceedingly venomous, and their bites speedily prove fatal. There is little danger to be apprehended, except from snakes in the grass; the danger being in stepping upon one unawares. There are many remedies, which may be spoken of in the next article, but the one surest in effect and most generally in use is whiskey in large doses and soon taken. This may account for the general and wide-spread use of that article, as it is in great demand, and there are many who believe that a pound of prevention is worth an ounce of cure, and act accordingly.

Healthfulness of the country is the first consideration. It has been abundantly and conclusively shown that Florida is tolerably free from any endemic disease. The climate of the coast is remarkably salubrious and conducive to health. Except in the near vicinage of swamps, and along the rivers and fresh-water lakes in summer, there is no cause for alarm, and one can preserve his health with tolerable care. A winter's residence in any section of Florida is not likely to give one what is so universally and justly dreaded—the "shakes." I have camped in swamps and marshes night after night, and passed weeks upon the banks of rivers and lakes,

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with no covering over me at night except my blanket and mosquito bar, and have yet to feel the slightest touch of fever. I have known of instances of fever the first season, but do not think the disease was contracted there. So far as my observation extends, I am inclined to agree fully with one better qualified to judge than myself, that "Florida possesses a much more agreeable and salubrious climate than any other State or Territory in the Union."

FRED BEVERLY.

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VIII.

SUPPLEMENTARY HINTS FOR CHEAP RECREATION.

THE first consideration to the winter visitor to Florida, is the climate, which is delightful. I do not think so agreeable a place can be found in the United States. I am not so good a judge of the winter climate of California, having spent but one winter there, and think the climate of Florida much more dry, five days out of six bright and cloudless; three, four, and five weeks at a time, clear and bright, and of most agreeable temperature, and even as far north as Palatka there are generally but two or three nights in the whole winter that ice is formed. Rain rarely falls, and this is the great charm of winter climate, and enables the sportsman to be comfortable in his tent, when in Georgia, Texas, or California, he would wish himself in the hotel. The whole coast, east and west, swarms with fish, and of a very fine quality; pompano, sheepshead, grouper, red-fish, king-fish, Spanish mackerel, mullet, turtle, and such oysters—for flavor and size they beat anything to be found North. The St. Johns river is also full of fish. Shad are plenty all winter, and in the upper parts of the river black bass were so plenty as to often jump into our boats, and eight to ten pounders are very common. Game, except quail, is getting scarce about the

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larger places; but you have only to go into the country to find abundance of deer and turkey.

When I commenced, I intended from my experience to tell of a more pleasant way to spend winters in Florida than Mr. Beverly's (provided you have money enough), and without costing near as much as to live at the hotels, have a better table, and lots of fine sport, and withal the most comfortable and pleasant way a company of gentlemen can spend winters in Florida. Let a half dozen good fellows get up a light-draft stern-wheel steamer, to draw about twenty inches of water—just such a boat as the little Clifton, so well known on the St. Johns river for several years. The writer was on board of her for two winters. She cost about $4,000, built and fitted up at Philadelphia, was used four or five winters as a pleasure-boat, and then sold for a ferry-boat without much loss. Three men made up the crew. The whole expense was about $15 each day, which, divided among six, was not high for such fishing and hunting as we used to get; and such bird suppers as Reuben could get up I never expect to see again. This boat was built by a party of gentlemen from Clifton Springs, New York, and run down from Philadelphia. One could be got up much cheaper now, in Jacksonville. Such a boat can go to the upper waters of the St. Johns, above where hunters go, and where game is plenty. The St. Johns is a wonderful river, and one of great magnitude, and it has always been a wonder to me where so much fresh water comes from. It runs from south to north, is over 300 miles long, and in many places is very near the coast. It appears more like a beautiful chain of lakes, for more than a hundred miles from its mouth, and will average nearly two miles wide,

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for that distance. The tide is felt as far up as Pilatka, and what appears singular, when it is high water at the mouth of the river it is low tide at Jacksonville. Visitors should always go up as far as Enterprise, to see the beautiful lakes and wonderful springs. We could not get the Clifton much above Lake Winder. A floating island covered with willows had drifted across the channel, and we could only get up in small boats to Lake Washington. We found Lake Winder a fine place for game; deer and turkeys where very abundant, and more snipe than we had seen in Florida. We also found many birds which we did not see about Lakes Harney and Jessup. The carrocca eagle, in full, light plumage, was common; also the purple gallinule, coast bittern, yellow-crowned night heron; and we found many extensive breeding places. This is the home of the alligators, and they used to trouble us by getting our birds as they fell into the water, before we could get to them. Sport can be had with alligators by bating a shark hook with a coot, or some other bird. Fasten the end of the rope to the top of a small tree that bends well, and in the morning you are almost sure to find one hooked. If a large one, you can only pull him into the bank; if a small one, keep away from his tail, or teeth, and to get your hook, after you are done playing with him, you must shoot him. In their stomachs you will most always find a roll of feathers, fish, and often large moccasin snakes, and they sometimes eat one another. I have seen one, eight feet long, in a large one's mouth. Favorite birds for our party to shoot were the white-plumed cranes, egrets, snowy herons, for their plumes; and we could make quite good collections of Florida bird skins. The steamer had two small boats, so we could go up the

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small creeks; and we explored most every lake and stream on the river. Although we were so far south, we had no trouble with insects. All the windows had wire gauze, and we were careful to keep the doors shut. Our sleeping accommodations and our dining room were very good. The boat would run about ten miles an hour, and we could change our location very easily. We found moccasin snakes very abundant in the upper country, but had no trouble with them. One day we lost a rowlock from the boat, and proposed to the black man, Bill, to take off his clothes and get it up with his feet. As he reached the bottom he stepped on a large snake, which coiled about his leg. He went ashore with a yell, and one of our party said he was the whitest man in the lot. He was sure he was bit, and kept hold of his pulse to see if he was not dying; but was not hurt. The snake appeared as much frightened as Bill. We saw very few rattlesnakes. One of our party, Mr. Rice, at Lake Jessup, shot a white heron that fell into the water near the shore. He saw a large alligator start for the bird, and Rice thought he could get the bird before the alligator, which he did, and threw the bird over his shoulder, the alligator following; and as he reached the bank the alligator struck his legs, but did him no damage. I have made this paper too long, and can recommend for real comfort such a cruise. Such a steamer, after going up the St. Johns river could be taken around to St. Augustine, and so down to Indian river, and the expense less than to live at the hotels.

GEO. A. BOARDMAN.

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ANOTHER PLAN FOR CHEAP RECREATION.

It has been stated that the trip to Enterprise from Jacksonville will cost $12, and to return $12; entire trip, $24. A large portion of this expenditure can be advantageously saved by the tourists making the trip in a small boat. If the seeker for pleasure camps out at a particular point on the river, he will soon tire of a daily view of the same objects, and crave for pastures new. A person who proposes spending several months in the State would find a boat journey pleasant, as well as instructive.

Let two or three excursionists unite and purchase a second-hand batteau about eighteen feet long, which can be obtained at from twenty to thirty dollars in any of our Northern cities; supply her with centreboard, rudder, and a sprit, or leg-of-mutton sail, costing in the aggregate from thirty-five to forty-five dollars. We visited Jacksonville a few days since, and made inquiries regarding the price of boats, and we have reason to believe that the boat would prove a safe investment, and bring cost price; if the boat was even abandoned at end of trip, her purchase would prove a more profitable investment than paying for passage up and down the river. From Jacksonville to Pilatka, and at other points along the river, a sail can be used as a means of effecting a change of base: and when old Boreas fails in his attentions, an "ashen breeze" can be used *ad libitum*, and the river ascended at from two to three miles per hour. With a boat, the tourists could examine the various tributaries and lakes *en route*, and visit unfrequented localities, where excellent hunting and fishing can be secured. At Enterprise the tourists could secure a stock

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of provisions, ascend the river to Lakes Winder and Washington, and enjoy hunting and fishing in localities seldom visited by sportsmen.

Having lived in tents in more than one portion of the world, I flatter myself that I am an authority on nomadic subjects, and must differ with your correspondent regarding the construction of tents. He recommends one "with walls four feet high," but trampers will find an Λ-shaped tent, seven feet to ridge, nine feet deep and seven feet wide, the most portable, easiest to pitch, best to shed rain, coolest under a hot sun, and last, though not least, the cheapest and easiest to make by the uninitiated. The cost of the material, at eighteen cents per yard, would be about five dollars, and the trampers could make it on board of the vessel before reaching Jacksonville.

Food is an important item, and a proper fit-out in the way of fishing tackle and sporting appliances would add to the culinary department as well as curtail expenditure for eatables. If unsupplied with strong-jointed rods, we would advise the excursionists to provide themselves, before leaving the North, with four strong Japan cane rods (not bamboo,) a few spinners and spoons, and some strong lines and Virginia, Limerick, or Chestertown hooks. A mess of trout (bass) can be captured at any time by trolling with a spinner and line from 60 to 120 feet in length, in open water. But as lily pads exist in many lakes, ponds, and rivers, a bob must be used. A very useful bob can be made by tying a few scarlet feathers to a strong hook. Line to be about three feet in length, and attached to the end of a long and stout pole. One must cautiously row the boat, and another skitter the open places between the lily pads. When a fish is

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hooked, the fisherman must haul in his rod hand over hand, for if a large fish is allowed to play among the lily pads, and foul the line, the excursionists will be apt to retire to roost supperless. The above has not been written for the benefit of experts; but for those whose larder may require replenishing. The artistic mode of fishing for trout (bass) is with rod, reel, float, and minnow in open water. The uninitiated will ask, How am I to capture minnows in the wilderness, where earth-worms cannot be secured for bait? I am disposed to aid the greenhorn, and would advise him to examine the stems of the lily pads, and in many of them he will discover a small hole. If the stem is split open a borer will be discovered; and if these, with small hooks, are used in shallow water, a supply of minnows can be captured. But by using a bob, a spinner, or spoon, a supply of fish can be secured at almost any point above Pilatka.

If three should unite in an excursion to Florida, the cost of trip by sailing vessel and return would be $90 (and as a majority of vessels go out light, transportation could be secured for boat free of charge). Expense of boat, $40; small stove and cooking utensils, $10; fishing rods and tackle, $8; ammunition, $12; tent, $6. Leaving $134 for provisions and incidental expenses. We have reason to believe that the boat would bring $20, if not prime cost, which would be placed to the credit of the provision account. By the use of a boat the trip can be made for a very small sum.

"AL FRESCO."

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IX.

UP THE ST. JOHNS RIVER.

FOUR winters ago the writer was one of a merry dozen who, on pleasure bent, helped swell the overwhelming stream of tourists who, fleeing from the Northern cold, sought shelter in the Sunny South. After various incidents of travel we found ourselves in the crowded parlors of the St. James at Jacksonville, and planned our trip. Two years have wrought great changes since then, even in that sleepy land, and I am pleased that this winter's flock of tourists will find better hotel accommodations everywhere than fell to our lot on that day. Even as it was—Tocoi railroad and all—that trip is one to be remembered a life-time; and all who can make it should do so.

We left Jacksonville on a bright warm morning, in the Florence, a comfortable boat, with courteous and obliging officers; and comfortably seated on deck enjoyed the trip exceedingly from Jacksonville to Tocoi. Every mile carried us farther from the frosty North. The St. John is a magnificent stream. Originating among the Everglades in the south of Florida, it flows northward nearly three hundred miles, when it bends sharply to the east, and empties into the ocean twenty-three miles from Jacksonville, which is at the bend. For over one hundred miles from its mouth it will aver-

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age three miles in breadth, expanding occasionally into beautiful lakes. Thus the first day of our trip we were in such wide waters that, except as we approached the landings, we did not get the benefit of the semi-tropical scenery of the banks. But the air was soft and balmy, the sky blue, water smooth and clear, and we, just started and fresh, were in high spirits and enjoyed every moment.

Our first landing was at Mandarin, where, amid an orange grove and splendid group of water-oaks, Mrs. Stowe has built herself a home. The place is but a hamlet, and after delivering our mail we hurry along; but not until they have rounded a point and shut in the view do the tourists relinquish their gaze upon this sunny Southern home. Twelve miles farther carries us to Magnolia. At this point we found a goodly assemblage of guests. The hotel accommodations are the best, the hotel itself is beautifully situated, and a good table, with good attendance, insure a good time. Black Creek is a navigable stream for fishermen and sportsmen. On a sunny day its banks are lined with alligators, while fish and game of all descriptions are plentiful. Two miles above Magnolia is Green Cove Springs, where are also a good hotel and boarding house. This is a great resort for invalids, who can enjoy daily a bath in a sulphur spring, which has given the place its importance. This famous spring is situated about a hundred yards from the landing, amid a group of great water-oaks which, covered with hanging festoons of gray moss and mistletoe, add to its beauty more than any artificial setting could to this emerald gem. The spring boils up in great lumps from a deep crevice, and fills a pool some twenty feet in diameter with its bright but greenish-hued water, clear as a

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crystal—a green crystal. Every little speck on the bottom is distinctly visible, even in the deep crevice, which is, I should judge, about twenty feet in depth. The outlet forms quite a little river, and over it a bathing house has been built; and here those suffering with rheumatic or kindred complaints luxuriate in its warm embrace. Seventy-six degrees is the average temperature summer and winter, seldom varying from this point more than a degree or two. The water is slightly sulphurous; more perceptibly so in the odor than in the taste, but sufficiently to banish any form of animal or reptile life from its proximity. This, in a country which snakes are said to frequent, is in itself a great inducement, but I am inclined to think that the snake crop of Florida is vastly overrated. An old hunter told me that he had been out for deer at least three times a week since Christmas, and had not encountered a snake. On the other hand, one of the natives informed me that "there was a right smart chance of moccasins." But wherever else they may locate, the Green Cove Spring is exempt, and the invalid may enjoy his bath without a nervous tremor.

About noon we arrived at Tocoi—or, as we afterward dubbed it, Decoy—forty-five miles from Jacksonville. This miserable apology for a place contains one old tumble-down house, and two rough board shanties, which latter constitute the depot at the western terminus of the St. Augustine railroad. This road is fifteen miles in length, and should make an easy approach to St. Augustine. We thought we were nearly there, but we knew more about it soon afterward. Could we have but foreseen the hardships we were to go through, we might have decided not to proceed. Two hours' strolling about or sitting on logs

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under the shadeless pines used up our time, while a little asthmatic tea-kettle of a steam-engine was being tinkered into going condition. Finally, ready for its task, it was hitched to two dilapidated boxes on wheels, into which, by tight crowding, we succeeded in squeezing ourselves. The day was chilly, the cars full of cracks and drafts; where there should have been windows but the holes remained; and water-proofs and capes had to be substituted for glass. We needed but a rain to complete our discomfort. The road itself is, if possible, more disgraceful than the cars, the rails of pine and cypress (no iron) were worn, chipped, shivered, and rotten. We smashed one flat to the ties, and had a narrow escape from being capsized into the swamp; and had our engine the power to have bumped us along a few feet further, we should have had a serious, perhaps fatal, accident to wind up our pleasure trip. As it was, all hands turned out, and lifting our crazy vans again upon the track, we crawled along for nearly five hours, delaying at times to put a new rail on the track, to dip a few bucketfuls of muddy water from the ditch into the boiler, or to cut up a log to furnish nutriment to our wheezy little engine. At last, the fifteen miles accomplished, we reached St. Augustine tired and worn-out. May we never have to go over that road again. The road leads through a swampy country, and some of the scenery was almost grand: great cypress trees, with their swollen feet standing in murky pools, and draped with huge "weepers" of gray moss hanging from every branch three to six feet in length; foul turkey-buzzards resting upon the lofty trees, or sailing about in muffled, noiseless flight, gave a funereal character to the scenery from which Dante might have drawn his inspiration. I

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am sure we saw the counterpart of the Stygian pool. And yet it was not all so gloomy. Bright-hued flowers, green parasites entwining whole groups of adjacent trees, great bunches of mistletoe on the oaks, and now and then a bright cardinal bird or blue jay flitting among the branches, gave us plenty to admire, and almost whiled away the time; and we had our own internal resources—songs, stories, and hard-boiled eggs.

In the morning, after our arrival at St. Augustine, our first trip was to the Old Fort. This venerable pile of coquina is interesting principally because of its antiquity, and from the historical associations connected with it. Started three hundred years ago, it was a hundred years in building. It was owned and garrisoned successively by Spanish, English, United States, and Confederate troops. It was bombarded by Sir Francis Drake's fleet, the marks of whose balls are still visible on its sea face. It has gloomy dungeons, in one of which, discovered some years since by accident, two chained skeletons were found. It has an old vaulted chapel, with its altar and niches for images, now all defaced, and the floor marred and scarred as though it had been used to chop wood on. Our irreverent member thought that the old monks must have had sharp knees, from the looks of the floor. The "old sergeant," who acted as our cicerone, is a character, and relieved his dry statistics with a drier humor peculiarly his own. He showed us a dungeon where two Seminole chiefs—I forget their names—had been confined, and a slit in the wall through which one of them escaped. They must have starved that Indian very successfully before he could have accomplished it. A subterranean passage is popularly supposed to exist,

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connecting the fort with the convent, but it has not been found. In one of the dungeons the "old sergeant" sprang upon us what was evidently a pet joke. Pausing in his tale until the loiterers were collected around him, and standing in chilly reverence, he told us of some prisoners who, from that very dungeon, had attempted to escape by burrowing under the walls. He told us of the great distance to be undermined before reaching the moat and liberty—some thirty yards, I believe. Standing with his back to the wall he slowly lighted half a dozen dips as he talked, then turning suddenly aside he threw the concentrated rays into a hole about two feet deep, and curtly remarked, "They didn't succeed." With this *coup de théâtre* the old gentleman, satisfied that he had ended well, left us to find our way to the outer air and to stroll through the narrow streets of the town, between the high dead walls and under the projecting balconies that characterize the Spanish style of building and give to St. Augustine an aspect so different from anything to be seen elsewhere in the United States. The names of the streets, and the signs over the stores, show the Spanish origin of the inhabitants; for instance, our party were domiciled at Mrs. Mercedes', Mrs. Hernandez', and Mrs. Seguis', and we shopped at Madame Oliveros'. The Spanish cast of feature prevails, too, and a dark-eyed, black-haired brunette, whom I saw leaning over a balcony, carried me back to days gone by, when, in old Spain herself, I have seen her counterpart. A walk along the sea wall, built of coquina (a concrete of shells), which fronts the town, where the fresh sea-breeze brought new vigor to our tired steps, and a cruise among the establishments devoted to the manufacture of palmetto hats, brought

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our day to a close. These hats are being manufactured and sold in immense numbers. One lady—Madame Oliveros—who has the most extensive establishment, employs fifty women, and her sales in one season, I was told, amounted to seven thousand.

We left St. Augustine with mixed emotions; while we had received the utmost kindness and hospitality from private individuals, hitherto strangers to us, and were delighted at the quaint old-fashioned town, and charmed with the warm, pleasant climate tempered by a bracing sea-breeze, we had nothing pleasant to remember of those whose duty it was to look out for the comfort of guests; and we felt that until good hotels, large enough and well enough conducted to furnish some comforts, could be added to its present stock, and until some method of getting there free from the discomfort, anxiety, and danger of the Tocoi railroad can be devised, the invalid should avoid, and the pleasure-seeker flee from it.

Our trip to Tocoi was made in the same comfortless boxes, and a good hard rain was added to the previous discomforts. We got over without serious accident, but the pleasure of the rest of the trip was alloyed by the illness of some of the more delicate, brought on by the hardship of the trip.

At Tocoi we found the Hattie awaiting us—a small steamer, but necessarily so, as the rest of our trip was to be made in narrow streams and shoal water. We were very comfortable on board of her. The table was good, quarters clean, and the captain—Charley Brock—a good fellow. Our first stopping place was Pilatka, ten miles beyond, and here we remained until some time in the night, to enable us to pass over the

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entrance to Lake George by daylight. This gave us opportunity for a stroll about the town, and to enjoy a most delicious supper at a well-kept hotel, the Putnam House.

Pilatka is the head of navigation for the larger steamers plying on the river, and has considerable commerce. Leaving at midnight, we awoke the next morning in the midst of scenery ever to be remembered. The river is narrow, the banks but a few feet off, as the channel neared one shore or the other, and are densely covered with a tropical vegetation. Palms, palmettos, water-oaks, and pines are the principal large trees, all festooned with gray moss. The stream is so crooked that at no one time can we see half a mile in advance; thus gliding along with our visual limit constantly circumscribed, we seem to be in the centre of an ever-advancing and ever-changing panorama: herons, cranes, ducks, and other birds of all descriptions give animation, and if the day be sunny, countless alligators dozing upon the banks furnish rare sport to the sportsman. Sometimes great monsters, twelve to fourteen feet in length, are seen, and eagerly shot; and if a large one be shot, the obliging captain will stop the boat to secure the head, which, when reduced to the condition of skull alone, is considered quite a curiosity, while the teeth are of beautiful ivory, and are carved into all sorts of trinkets. Our day, though, was cold and rainy, and alligators scarce; few were seen, and none killed. At first the more timid of our lady companions objected shrinkingly to our firing from their midst, but after a few palpable misses they became convinced that our rifles were not dangerous, even to the game, and from protesting against it became rather fond of the sport; and they

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all forgot that it was Sunday till a sharp rain drove us in and broke up the shooting match ; then they expressed themselves !

Just before sunset we entered Lake Munroe, where the river expands into a noble lake, over six miles in diameter. On its western side is situated the town of Mellenville, where we got such beauties of lemons, ten to twelve ounces each, and cheap—four cents apiece. Thence we crossed over to Enterprise. This little place consists of a hotel, a store, and two or three houses, and has a population of perhaps forty. It is the farthest point to which a regular line of steamers plies, but to the sportsman there is still another hundred miles of narrow river, deep lagoons, gloomy bayous, and wild, untrodden land, where all sorts of game, such as bears, wild turkeys, deer, and ducks are plentiful, and the waters teem with great varieties of fish. Splendid black bass, ten pounds in weight, abound—they call them trout here—besides bream, perch, and great catfish, from three pounds up to incredible figures. For the benefit of travellers, I would state that the story of the bears here being web-footed is not strictly in accordance with fact. There is a fair hotel at Enterprise. It is clean, beautifully situated near an orange grove, with a fine outlook on the lake, a fine sulphur spring near by, and a little lake two miles inland, where our fishermen secured a fine string of black bass in an afternoon's fishing, and a woody back country, which, when Tyson goes out with his hounds, will always yield at least one deer, and generally more. From here parties penetrate into the Indian river country, where a bag of a dozen alligators is but an ordinary day's work. The little steamer Silver Spring, with an experienced captain, takes

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charge of this part of the ceremony. At Enterprise we succeeded in getting a few oranges. The crop had all been picked and sold, and oranges were not so plentiful in Florida as in New York. Although we saw none of the sweet oranges on the trees (March 20th to 30th), yet we were fully as much pleased with the sight of the wild orange. This fruit, although uneatable, is larger and of a more golden hue than the eatable orange; the leaf is nearly the same, but of a darker, glossier green, and the flower identical. These we saw in profusion. A great drawback to the success of agricultural pursuits in Florida is the latinia, or scrub palmetto, growing as a bush from three to five feet in height. Its roots extend in all directions near the surface, like great cables three inches in diameter, and form an impervious network through which a plough cannot be forced.

Leaving Enterprise at one A. M., we again had a cold and rainy day. Wise through experience, we did not waste our time watching for alligators that would not come out, so made ourselves happy in the cabin. At Green Cove our party broke up; all who could remaining at that lovely spot, and the rest of us parting here and there, as our roads homeward diverged.

L. A. BEARDSLEE.

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X.

INDIAN RIVER.

BEGINNING some thirty or thirty-five miles to the southward of St. Augustine, and extending along the coast of Florida about one hundred and seventy-five or eighty miles, are two salt water-lagoons, separated from the ocean by a mere narrow fringe of sand. The larger and more southward of these is known as Indian river, and the other as Mosquito lagoon. They are separated by a low belt of sand, resting upon a bed of shell conglomerate scarcely two miles broad.

It is, however, with Indian river that I have present concern, as it is possessed of peculiar, extraordinary, and little known attractions and resources, which, if properly developed, would make it an unequalled sanitarium for pulmonary subjects. With its northern extremity near Cape Canaveral, this sheet of water stretches southward for about one hundred and fifty miles, with but one narrow communication with the ocean—Indian River Inlet, latitude 27 deg. 30 min. north. The long, narrow strip of sand on either side of the inlet, which, as I have said, separates the lagoon from the ocean, is nowhere broader than one mile. Here and there the winds and waves have heaped up the sand into clusters of low dunes, but next to the waters of the lagoon there is a dense growth of the mangrove (*Rhizophoracea*), wood of small diameter,

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but of a beautiful red color, and takes a very fine polish, and the whole zone is thickly dotted with the graceful, picturesque, and useful cabbage palmetto tree, which is valuable as a timber for many purposes, and its leaves also, while its unexpanded young foliage is a delicious vegetable. Other and even more valuable trees of the same (palm) species might be largely introduced, as, for example, the cocoanut, which has been shown to flourish there. It is in part this low-lying skirt of luxuriantly wooded, dry sandy soil, breaking the force of tempestuous winter winds, met at times on the southern Atlantic coast, which makes the western shore of Indian river so highly favorable as a winter residence for invalids.

Near Indian River Inlet, upon the main land, a military post (Fort Capron) was established in November, 1849, and careful meteorological observations were taken for a series of years, which show rare climatological characteristics peculiarly favorable for pulmonary patients, that is to say, a singularly equable temperature with comparative dryness. For example, during a period of five years ending with 1854 the mean temperature of the winter months was 63 deg. 20 min., with a relatively small rain-fall during the late autumn, winter, and early spring months, or 217 fair-weather days for the year.

The lagoon has a coralline bed, and is free from marshes. Communicating with the sea by Indian River Inlet, as I have stated, it likewise receives a good deal of fresh water through Santa Lucia river, which is an outlet of the Everglades. It teems to an almost incredible degree with fish of the finest and most palatable varieties, including that most delicate and toothsome of all American fish, the pompano. Never, indeed, on either the Atlantic, Gulf, or Pacific coast

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have I seen fish so fat and well flavored. The ordinary mullet, here very fine, is found in extraordinary shoals at certain seasons, and nowhere else is the sheepshead so fine and dainty a fish as in Indian river. As for the oyster, it is worth a visit to Indian river to eat those found there, especially those which have been transplanted; their flavor is the finest in the United States.

Some four miles southward of the inlet, the western shore rises some thirty feet above the level of the sea into a bluff of compact, broken, or decomposed shell, for some, distance. Here there are fine situations for building, with the necessary space for small plantations of tropical fruits and plants, which thrive so well in all that region. There are already orange orchards which have been planted for a quarter of a century. The pineapple, found in most of its numerous varieties, and other intertropical fruits, do as well here as in the Antilles. Northward the shore is skirted in large part by narrow reaches of dry hammock land, covered with the live-oak. This soil is shallow, but underlaid by a marl, which keeps fresh its virgin fertility, and is found particularly well adapted to the growth of sugar-cane, which comes to flower or tassel on Indian river as in Cuba, but not habitually in Louisiana. Therefore, the cane of Indian river is richer in saccharine matter to the pound than that of Louisiana.

Immediately back of these arable tracts, the very timber of which is so valuable in ship-building, there runs a sand ridge, which here and there abuts directly upon the water of the lagoon, and is everywhere covered with noble pines, affording an exhaustless supply of accessible building timber. Rearward of this ridge the country, somewhat lower than the ridge, stretches out into great spaces

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of pine barrens, which afford, however, a fine range and pasturage for cattle, and abound in game, such as deer and wild turkey, while in winter the lagoon is alive with wild duck. On the slope of this ridge, toward the lagoon, by digging wells of ten or fifteen feet, an abundance of pure, delicious water is developed, being simply the rain-water of the great pools in its rear, filtered through the sand ridge.

A glance at the map discloses the fact that for more than thirty miles of its upper course, the St. Johns river, flowing northward, is parallel with Indian river lagoon, at an average distance of not more than ten miles. At several points, indeed, the distance is reduced to eight miles, so that a canal of that length, through ground peculiarly favorable for cheap and easy construction, would give water communication by steam with Jacksonville, and in fact with Charleston. At the same time, during the late fall, winter, and early spring tides, the inlet affords passage to steamers drawing from eight to ten feet of water, with a completely sheltered harbor immediately within the bar. Beside fish to so marvellous a degree in variety, numbers, and excellence for food, Indian river is likewise the resort for turtle. The vegetation and flora, by no means so luxuriant as that of inter-tropical regions, are, however, largely of the same description. The trees are covered with beautiful air-plants, and other parasitic plants, which open a broad field of interesting investigation. The tree yielding gum-caoutchouc by exudation, for example, is there, although not in quantities for commercial purposes, and is an interesting feature of the landscape from its peculiar growth or habit of climbing and staying itself by the trunk of another tree, which it finally envelops, crushes, and de-

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stroys. Several species of very closely grained, heavy, high-colored woods, susceptible of fine polish, and adapted to the uses of the cabinet-maker, are there in abundance. Undoubtedly, the Campeachy or logwood, would thrive, if introduced upon the beach or seaward shore of the lagoon, or would soon so multiply (as in Santo Domingo, where it was first planted for hedges) as to become a valuable product.

And so I might go on enumerating what nature has planted or supplied in forest and stream, and what man might easily do to make at least a charming health resort of Indian river, but I will only add that I have myself seen some remarkable evidences of the benefits which persons of both sexes, having diseased lungs, have received there—benefits that proved lasting—with some yet more remarkable instances of persons so diseased that elsewhere they were in constant pain, who yet were able to live a prolonged and comfortable life in that singularly equable temperature. I likewise passed one summer upon the lagoon, and never found the heat oppressive, as it was habitually tempered by a soft, gentle breeze. The only discomfort was the mosquito, against which, however, it was not difficult to guard by proper precautions.

It is a misfortune that the real climate and general sanitary advantages of Indian river are not widely known to the thousands who suffer from weak lungs and bronchial affections in the New England and Middle States.

THOS. JORDAN.

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XI.

FLORIDA, THE PROMISED LAND.

A FEW months since, we resolved to leave our native State, and settle on the banks of Indian river. Our chosen route led us overland, and journeying along in primitive style, we enjoyed rare opportunities of seeing Florida in many of her different phases. Her scenery is of an exceedingly variegated character; in some places picturesque, even grand; in others, dull and dreary beyond description. Those who paint Florida wholly in radiant hues and flowery terms of praise, doubtless remember only some beauteous scenes which fill the memories with such fair pictures that other impressions are overshadowed and forgotten. One can scarcely fancy a more lonely, deserted-looking region than that we often traversed, our road sometimes winding many miles through a barren pine section, offering nothing new to our curious eyes except some hundreds of salamander beds, whitening the woods as far as we could see. Except at long intervals, no signs of other life, animal or human, enlivened the dull monotony of such scenes. But sometimes we came unexpectedly upon something attractive. After journeying many miles through what seemed to us an endless stretch of narrow, sandy road, winding through a limitless extent of pine woods, we were prepared, by force of contrast, to enjoy

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the magnificient view which met our delighted eyes as we crossed the Suwanee river—the old stream so interwoven with recollections of the song, heard so often in days gone by. As far as we could see, the banks were crowned with majestic water-oaks, whose rich dark-green foliage was beautifully silvered over with long gray moss drooping low to the water's edge. The slanting sunbeams lent a golden glory to the tree-tops, and we crossed the strongly flowing current, gazing in silent admiration at this new loveliness displayed by ever-varied nature. During our journey thence to Newnansville we passed many thrifty-looking farms, but the town itself seems fast going to decay. No new buildings attested prosperity and progress, and in most cases, the original ones were sadly in need of repair. The route onward to Gainsville seemed far less monotonous. We found it a thriving town, its main streets thronged by pedestrians and vehicles, while the coming and going of the railway trains imparted a sensation of nearness to, and connection with, the great busy, bustling, outside world. In passing from there to Orange Spring, we noticed many snug little farms, most of them new, and now we began to realize that we had entered the orange region of Florida, as there was scarcely a house not surrounded by orange trees in various stages of growth. Orange Spring appears to have once been a place of some note. The ruins of a large hotel mutely attest its former popularity as a place of resort, while its numerous comfortable dwellings, and some new stores, show there is life in that region yet. Its situation is charming, crowning a considerable eminence, and considering its attractions, one does not wonder at its former fame. Its name is probably derived in part from a large sulphur spring

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near by, a favorite resort in summer, when its waters are said to be delightfully cool and refreshing. This spring is nearly circular, about forty or fifty feet in diameter, and of a dark-green color. We spent a night in the village, with the widow of a Baptist minister, and shall not soon forget her hospitality, nor her quaint anecdotes. The kindness extended us during our long journey convinced us that, in spite of the cant about the "cold, selfish world," there is much good-will throbbing in the great heart of humanity. The difficulty usually lies in not knowing just how to rouse it into action. In the vicinity of Orange Spring we noticed quite a number of ponds, but not the muddy, swamp-encircled ones usually seen in Florida. These lay here and there, looking "like mirrors framed in green." The waving pines and luxuriant wire-grass grew to the water's edge. The sight of the St. Johns revived legendary memories of the dusky youths and maidens who doubtless once sailed gayly over its beloved waters in their light canoes. But they have long since passed into the "Land of Shadows."

Not far eastward of Enterprise we passed the ruins of Spring Garden, once a farm of unusual dimensions. It was saddening to ride through the deserted fields, whose fences have long since disappeared, now being rapidly overgrown with a species of scrubby oak and pine. A lake of moderate extent, and abounding in fine mullet, is found within its borders.

The strip of land lying immediately between the St. Johns and Indian rivers is a dismal-looking region, abounding in swampy flats and cabbage sloughs, and of necessity thinly inhabited. On arriving at Sand Point, however, we found a community of intelligent thorough-going people, one good hotel, and one excellent boarding-

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house, furnishing very acceptable accommodations to visitors. The proposed railway from there to Lake Harnee will add considerably to the interests of this country, and render Indian river far more easily and comfortably accessible to the settler, to the invalid, and to pleasure seekers wishing to explore its far-famed waters. This river, more correctly an arm of the sea, has been unduly extolled by its friends, and proportionably defamed by its enemies. Thus many have, on arrival, been surprised agreeably or disagreeably, according to their preconceived ideas of its merits or demerits. Many regard this as a remote frontier country, almost inaccessible, possessing few or no advantages, and as scarcely habitable. It seems not generally known that there are families scattered all along from Sand Point to Fort Capron, houses in many places being less than half a mile apart. Merritt's Island, too, is attracting considerable attention, and in a few years there will probably be an extensive population in this section. As to the character of society, I have met as well-bred ladies and gentlemen here as I ever saw in any community. Many of the citizens represent some of the best families of Georgia, Alabama, and other States. A *few* objectionable characters will be found anywhere, and our country doesn't claim to be *entirely* exceptional in that respect.

Two or three ministers having now located among us, we can thus once more hear the Gospel proclaimed, and as settlers are moving in so rapidly, there is good reason to suppose that we will, before a great while, see flourishing schools and churches established.

Indian river is always beautiful; when its waters are placid as some inland lake, or when its waves are crested with foam, and furiously lashing its rocky shore. The

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roar of the ocean is distinctly audible at our home, and since living here, I can form some faint conception of the emotions which stirred the soul of the author of the "Murmuring Sea." I cannot better describe the climate of this favored land than to use Moore's words, "Its air is balm," and for the most part, the atmosphere is pure and refreshing to a delightful degree. On the western shore the scenery has quite a tropical air, owing to a profusion of cabbage palmettoes, resembling palms. The eastern side presents a decided contrast, the high white and yellow bluff being crowned principally with the pine.

In this semi-tropical region, the principal occupation of the people is fruit-growing. The orange, of course, takes precedence over other fruits, and we believe there will be a great demand for Indian river oranges, when once their superior sweetness and flavor shall become generally known. Many of us expect to make the citron and guava profitable. And judging from the growth of young fig-trees here, we expect to eventually "reap our reward" for the attention bestowed on them. By a little judicious pains-taking we can gather fresh vegetables from our gardens all the year round. Northern invalids are beginning to test the benefits of our winter climate, and in some cases with happy effect; some, however, defer coming until some fell disease has sapped their vital powers too strongly for them ever to be renovated; and so they come too late.

Many of the Indian river residents are enlarging their dwellings, for the purpose of accommodating visitors during another season. Lack of necessary means is the grand difficulty which cripples the efforts and energies of many who might otherwise get up elegant hotels

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and private boarding houses. However, there are some rough, uninviting looking buildings, where the travelling public will find within, neat, comfortable bed-rooms, and good, wholesome fare. The "finest oysters in the world" can be had in abundance during the winter season; fish can be had all the year round, venison is abundant, and a great variety of fruits flourish, while there are countless other objects to please the eye and gratify the taste for what is truly beautiful.

Many varieties of pretty shells can be found on the ocean beach. Sometimes one finds a sort of spiral case containing hundreds of diminutive shells. These make pretty necklaces, resembling white coral. The delicate flesh tint of these shells makes them beautiful, while their frailty insures their being carefully cherished. Just now, we Indian river citizens are compelled to live in a style not according to our former habits of life, or present desires, but we trust the day is not far distant when, instead of rude dwellings situated in the native wilds, the visitor here will behold handsome residences in the midst of grounds tastefully and lavishly adorned with all the different fruits, flowers, and evergreens which this climate is capable of producing.

C. B. MAGRUDER.

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XII.

FORT CAPRON.

HAVING served about two years in South Florida during the last Seminole, or "Billy Bowlegs" war, I think I may safely assert that Fort Capron, opposite Indian River Inlet, is the very place for a sportsman's hotel. Its mild and salubrious climate, together with the abundance of fruit, game, and fish to be found in its immediate vicinity, render it a place of unsurpassed attractions for both sportsman and invalid. There is absolutely no endemic disease at this place. Its mild, genial climate banishes all coughs, colds, and rheumatisms, while a line of hills in its rear effectually intercept the malarial exhalations of the fresh-water swamps of the interior. The chlorinated vapors brought by the trade-winds, which are constantly blowing from the sea, also exercise their powerful sanitary influence. The abundance of game and fish in the vicinity of Fort Capron is truly astonishing. During the prolonged period that I was stationed at that fort we were never, in the proper season, without game, fish, oysters, or green turtle. The fish found in the vicinity are red-fins (a species of drum, commonly called "red bass," the "rouge" of the Creole French about New Orleans), red-snapper, sheepshead, cavalli, sea trout, sea-mullet, and the far-famed pompano. These

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two last-mentioned fish do not take a bait. There are also two other remarkable fish inhabiting Indian river and the adjacent coast, whose scientific names I am unaware of. These are called by the natives the jew-fish and the tarpum. The former sometimes attains a weight of two or three hundred pounds, and resembles a bass in its general contour, while the latter presents more the appearance of a dace. The tarpum, owing to its graceful outlines and lustrous coloring, is a fish of most surpassing beauty. The scales on its sides are about the size and the brilliancy of a silver dollar, out of which the native females fabricate beautiful baskets. When a school of these fish are disporting themselves upon the surface of the waves, as is their frequent habit, the bright reflections from their sides produce an effect not unlike that presented by the burnished arms of a squad of soldiers at drill. This fish attains a length of about five or six feet, but is not so heavy as the jew-fish. The bar at Indian River Inlet is an unrivalled locality for short spearing, for those who are fond of that thrilling amusement. I have myself, in a common "Whitehall" boat, aided in harpooning fifteen or twenty in a morning. The rivers and creeks emptying into Indian river are filled with black bass (miscalled "black trout" by the natives). This species of black bass reach a much greater size than any other species of this fish I have ever met with. I have taken them weighing in the neighborhood of ten pounds, and I have seen others swimming in the water, that seemed to be almost as large again. Like the bass of the Upper Mississippi and lakes of Minnesota, and unlike the bass at present inhabiting the Potomac and its tributaries, it will readly rise to spoon or fly. They are apt to have a

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grassy taste during the summer, but as winter approaches they have as fine a flavor as any other fish of the genus. The streams which they inhabit, flowing as they do through the sandy soil of the "pine barrens," which contains but little sediment, are almost as transparent as the celebrated trout brooks of New England. Indian river, so called, is not properly a river; but rather a sound or salt-water lagoon, being separated from the ocean by a narrow strip of sandy land overgrown with palmettoes and mangroves. It is about one hundred and fifty miles long, and ranges from several miles to forty yards in width. On the east it is fed by several inlets from the sea, through which the tide ebbs and flows freely. Several large rivers enter it from the west, the principal of which are the San Sebastian, Santa Lucia, and Locha Hatchee. No country that I have ever visited affords as great a variety of game and fish as South Florida. Besides large game, such as bear, deer, turkeys, etc., this region literally swarms with snipe and ducks, at least during the winter months. Partridges (bob whites) are also sufficiently numerous to afford sport; but I have never seen a woodcock in that section. The snipe shooting on the savannahs is simply superb. These savannahs (or natural meadows) afford sufficient moisture to attract the birds, without being so miry as to render the walking difficult or fatiguing, as is so often the case at points further north. On one of these snipe grounds of many hundred acres in extent, several miles in rear of Fort Capron, I used to enjoy most delightful sport, seldom returning without a full bag.

I would advise sportsmen desirous of snipe shooting in that section, to take pointers instead of setters, for

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the long hair of these latter is likely to harbor the numerous sanguinivorous insects which there abound; its mild climate is also more suitable to the nature of the pointer.

Your correspondent Fred Beverly makes honorable mention of a gallant exploit of one of his followers whom he calls Jim. Now, if he alludes to "Jim" Russell, of Fort Capron (and I am pretty sure he does), I am happy to state that I am well acquainted with "Jim," and have had many a jolly day's sport in his company. During a sail-boat trip to Merrit's Island, in company with Lieutenant, now General, Jeff. C. Davis, of Captain Jack notoriety, and several others, among whom was our hero, we had occasion to take along a famous pointer of mine, Old Nat by name, for the purpose of varying our amusement by a little snipe shooting. Now, although Old Nat's moral status was none of the best, for he would "steal like a quartermaster," yet his admirable hunting qualities made him a great favorite with all. Like most of his species, he was very fond of consulting his own comfort and convenience. At the fort he was accustomed to sleep in a nice shady spot on my porch, and seeing a similar locality on the boat, produced by the shadow of the main-sail, he soon ensconced himself therein. After getting through with his snooze, and thinking himself, no doubt, still in his accustomed spot at home, he suddenly got up, and, much to our surprise and dismay, leaped overboard. As there was a violent gale blowing at the time, the "white caps" running angrily, and, furthermore, as the dog's chain soon became entangled with his legs, his peril became extreme. We luffed up promptly; but in spite of all our efforts the fate of the dog seemed sealed,

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when "Jim," throwing off his coat, boldly plunged into the seething, surging waves. A few strokes brought him near enough to lay hold of the collar of the drowning dog, but owing to the helpless condition of the latter he could not make much progress on his return to the boat. Owing to the increased violence of the storm, we now became aware of the alarming fact that we were slowly but surely falling to leeward, and our fears now became excited for Jim's safety also. We shouted to him to abandon the dog and save himself; but the gallant fellow would not do it. By letting the sail fall and using the oars with desperate energy, we were enabled to hold the boat in a stationary position, so that Jim, swimming with one arm and aided by the waves, succeeded, after a desperate struggle, in coming alongside with the dog. I soon pulled them both in, and we all applauded "Jim" for his manly daring; but to this day "Jeff" swears that I pulled the dog in first; but this however, I can never bring myself to agree to.

ASA WALL.

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XIII.

FISHING AT ST. AUGUSTINE.

ST. AUGUSTINE is a quaint old Spanish city, for a long time dull and quiet, but now waking up with the influx of Northern people, many of whom have built stately and beautiful residences for their winter sojourn. For real enjoyment, St. Augustine far surpasses any other part of Florida. You avoid the bustle of business in Jacksonville, as well as its sharp frosts and hot days; you are not "out of the world," as at Enterprise, nor is it so warm. The climate is charming; a happy medium; nor is it so variable as at most other places in Florida. Frost is almost unknown; also, extreme heat. You have good hotels, your daily mail, and, though the "morning papers" do not reach you until the afternoon, still, you are "in the world," while the facilities for boating, hunting, and fishing are unsurpassed. The bay is beautiful, and affords a fine opportunity for sailing. Whether your party tries the Osceola, or belle of the bay, of Mr. Ivanowski (*né* Sweeney), the Water Witch" of Captain Walton, or any of the smaller craft in the harbor, you can enjoy a pleasant and comfortable sail under safe pilotage. While for fishing, one has but to go to the sea-wall, or the long wharf, or take a skiff or a canoe and push out in the bay, and there will be no want of sport. The only drawback is the universal

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prevalence of the catfish, which is of all sizes, from the tiny youngster of three inches to the full-grown paterfamilias of two feet or more. These are of a gray color, and shaped like their Northern brethren, but covered with a thick, tough slime, just as the eels of the North are, and the result is, your hook, line, and fingers—and often clothes—get covered with this sticky substance. Your hook and line must be thoroughly cleansed, or no other fish will touch it; your hands and clothes are at your option. Another favorite fishing place is from the bridge over the San Sebastian, just at the back of the town. At any or all of these places you can catch bass, trout, sheepshead, mullet, flounders, sharks, and many other varieties.

One of the pleasantest amusements is fishing in the surf for bass. The *modus operandi* of this sport is somewhat as follows:

Remember that I am giving the custom of the country, and shall not be surprised if the scientific bass-fishers, who rejoice in forty-dollar reels and sixty-dollar rods with agate-mounted tips and rings, are somewhat disgusted. The line ordinarily used is nearly as thick as a cod-line, and about 50 yards long. A sinker, weighing about a half or three-quarters of a pound—with a hole through it—is strung on the line, and is kept there by a large knot on its end. Below this knot, and attached to the line proper by a somewhat smaller cord, is the hook—a cod-hook being generally used, or one a little smaller.

The fisherman is usually clad in an old flannel shirt, woollen trousers, and old, loose boots—with a broad-leaved straw or felt hat. The bait used is a string of mullet, procured at the early market (price five cents), which is cut into chunks about an inch square. Thus equipped,

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and with the end of the line tied around the waist, or to his wrist to prevent its escape as it flies out, and neatly coiled in his left hand to run off easily, and with a yard or two above the sinker hanging from his right hand, the fisherman wades into the surf, about waist deep, and swinging the sinker around his head, launches it out as far as he can, and then draws it gradually in, so as to keep the bait moving. When he feels a bite he gives a jerk, to hook the fish, and, if successful, he puts the line over his shoulder, and starts for the beach, going as fast as he can—for if he lets the line slack, he will probably lose his fish. On emerging from the water he runs out on the beach and drags the fish upon the sand, where he secures it—and, re-baiting his hook, starts for another throw. The hook, or hooks—sometimes two or more are used—are put on a smaller piece of line, on account of the abundance of small sharks, which literary swarm in the breakers, where the bass and other fish most do congregate, and are very apt to seize the bait and break the line, carrying off sinker and all, if it breaks above it. The sinker is perforated so that the bite can easily be felt, the line readily slipping through it. The surf is about fifty yards from the edge of the beach, there being a line of shoal about that distance, over which the waves break. Between this and the shore the water is shallow; about thigh-deep at low tide, and the fisherman wades out to the bank. As the tide rises he is obliged to come in, the surf breaking all the way to the shore when the water is two or three feet deep on the bar. It is not a very comfortable feeling to turn when on the shoal, and see a shark or two swimming up and down between you and the shore—especially if you have a bite and are making for the beach. But they are very shy, and quickly get

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out of the way. I never heard of any one being bitten. They are usually about three or four feet long, and are often caught. Still they are unpleasant neighbors. I remember one day, before a storm, when the water was dark and I could not see, while standing about waist-deep in this "middle ground," and fishing busily, feeling a sudden sharp nip on the ankle. I sprang clear of the water, for I thought it was a shark. But it was only a large sea-crab, which pinches powerfully. Fortunately, I had on very heavy pantaloons, so no damage was done —but the shock was tremendous, for sharks are very bold in dark water.

There are many large sharks and sword or saw-fish in the bay, and during the summer they are caught for the oil contained in their livers. From ten to twenty fish is about a fair afternoon's catch "during the season" —so they say.

Speaking of the bass-fishing in the surf reminds me of a somewhat ludicrous incident which is said to have occurred to one of our distinguished generals, just after the war. It seems a party were fishing at Brazos, in the Gulf, somewhat in the manner I have just described, and the General feeling a bite, started with the line over his shoulder in orthodox style for the beach, and ran out hauling his line. In course of time the fish was drawn out, and to the amazement of the General and the amusement of the rest of the party, proved to be only about six inches long. It is needless to say that the General's champagne suffered that evening, but the story leaked out nevertheless. So much for the fish.

Quail are plenty in the neighborhood of St. Augustine, and within a few miles deer and wild turkey are abundant; while occasionally one gets a chance for a

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"scrimmage" with a bear or panther. As to wild fowl, "their name is legion"; shore birds of all kinds, ducks, geese, herons, *et id omne genus*, can be had with a reasonable degree of trouble. Enough sport can be found in the neighborhood of St. Augustine to reward the most ardent sportsman; and I know of no place this side of Humboldt Bay, in California, where so many facilities for hunting and fishing are offered, or where the variety of game, fish, flesh, and fowl, is so great, or where a few weeks may be more agreeably passed by the sportsman.

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XIV.

BASS FISHING ON SPRUCE CREEK.

HEARING great stories of the size of the black bass, or trout, as they are called by the Floridians, in Spruce creek, a tributary of the Halifax river, I left New Smyrna with a boat and guide on the 23d of April, at 9 A. M., to test the truth of these fish stories. We sailed down the Hillsboro with a westerly breeze to the inlet, called Mosquito from the abundance of that familiar insect, and passing through a narrow gut between two sand-bars, we saw a large turtle of the loggerhead kind, which having been crippled by the attack of a shark which had bitten off half of one hind flipper, had crawled upon the sand. It weighed probably one hundred pounds, and could have easily been captured, but we had no use for it at the time. Crossing the inlet, we laid our course up the Halifax, into which, near its mouth, Spruce creek flows. At this place it is wide and shallow, winding through extensive marshes and mangrove islands, and much encumbered by oyster banks, many of which stretch across the stream. These oysters are large and well flavored, and so abundant that hundreds of vessels could be loaded with them. Sailed up the creek for two miles, meeting only one boat, which was shark fishing. Then we stopped to get bait, and Lewis, my guide, with a few casts of his net, procured for me a dozen mullet, the

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usual bait for all fishes in this region. Sailed on four miles further, when the banks began to be higher, and wooded, and the water grew fresh, when I put out a trolling line with mullet bait, and caught a red fish or channel bass of five pounds, and two salt-water trout of two pounds each (*Corvina ocellata* and *Otolitus Carolinensis*). Here on the east side of the creek we found a bluff of coquina rock, some fifty feet high, covered with forest trees, and with its sides washed by water into curious forms. The river at its base is very deep, and is said to contain large fish, especially snappers and groupers. About a mile above this bluff, having put out a second line with a spoon, I took with it my first black bass; it was of about two pounds' weight, and made the leaps characteristic of the species. Next I got a red-fish of about the same size. I observe these fish caught in fresh water are higher colored than those of salt water, the back being of a rich dark brown, and the sides of bright copper color. The salt-water trout taken here are also of deeper colors, with larger spots than those taken in the salt water. Three miles further, rain coming on, we stopped and camped, about 4 P. M., at a bluff on the west side, where the King's road, one hundred years ago, ran from St. Augustine down the coast. After the shower we rowed up the river a mile, and got half a dozen more black bass, and lost several by their habit of shaking out the hook as they leap. I got two dogfish (*Amia calva*), a western acquaintance, and not a valued one, as this fish, though interesting to naturalists from being the only representative of an old world family, is worthless as food, and makes himself so odious by cutting lines and breaking hooks, that the angler regrets that it should have survived its kindred.

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We swung our hammocks between two trees by the fire, and after a supper of bass, with bread and coffee, should have slept sweetly but for a band of hungry mosquitoes which, lighted by the moonbeams, found us out and sung in our ears their detestable song. Next morning we started at sunrise, and trolled up the creek with hand line and rod and reel, both having spoons attached. On the hand line Buel's propeller, in white metal; and on the reel line two brass fliers revolving round a brass wire; the latter seemed to be the favorite, and took more and larger fish. Got back to camp at 8 A. M., with twenty-five black bass and four red-fish. The former were from one to three pounds' weight, and the latter of about the same size; we lost three bass by shaking loose the hook. As the weather looked threatening, we broke camp and returned down the river, taking four more bass by the way. We got entangled among the oyster banks at low tide, and lost an hour, the rain falling heavily. When we got out of these shallows, we set our sail to the breeze, and went down the river flying, almost running over a large alligator which lay on the mud, as we rounded a point. As we emerged into the broad Halifax, we saw two objects on the further bank which looked, at the distance of half a mile, like bears, but being quite near a house, Lewis thought they must be black hogs feeding along the beach, though they looked too large for hogs of this region. We learned afterward that bears had repeatedly been seen on this very spot, and had carried off hogs from the man who lived there. So that if we had sailed down upon them, my guide having his rifle and hound in the boat, might probably have killed one or both.

Having caught these black bass (*Grystes salmoides*) in

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three rivers in Florida, the St. John, the Tomoka, and Spruce creek, I find them to be of about the average size of the same species in the western waters, viz., from two to three pounds; and although they may grow larger here than in the western lakes and rivers, yet I am inclined to think that those weighing from fifteen to twenty pounds, said to have been taken here, were estimated rather than weighed.

S. C. CLARKE.

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XV.

HUNTING THE PANTHER.

TO the average Florida tourist, who sails luxuriously up the St. John's, or stays idling at the hotel, the idea that there are predatory animals in the State rarely occurs. It is only to the camper-out that the privilege of making their acquaintance is vouchsafed. If he camp in a place sufficiently remote from civilization he will probably be favored with a sight at the animal mentioned above. It is more than likely that he will be favored with its moaning cry, or see its signs about his camp. The panther is so rarely seen, however, that it is regarded as mythical by many men professing to be hunters. It has been my rare good fortune to meet with, and be in at the death of one, and soon after the demise of several others. There is a vast difference existing between this panther, tiger, or puma, and the wild-cat, or lynx. The latter animal, and another, the catamount, occur in Florida, but are not half the size of the panther. The latter has been found measuring nine feet from tip to tip. I have seen one measuring eight feet four inches, and have the skin of one measuring eight feet good. In color, the panther is a yellowish-brown, darker on the back, growing to a yellowish-white on the belly. It has great strength, and no pack of dogs can successfully attack one. It frequents the

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swamps and hammocks during the day, and seeks its prey by night. Old hunters say it remains concealed in the large trees, ready to drop upon unwary travellers. Its tracks may be frequently seen in the woods back of Indian river, or interior. I have been told that an animal larger than this, spotted and striped—in fact, the regular tiger—was seen near New Smyrna, but this is the only related instance, and not likely to prove correct. This animal is more generally known by the name of tiger than any other, and as such is spoken of with dread by the "crackers." The only panther I ever had a hand in killing was a goodly sized one near Hope Sound. I was camped at St. Sebastian creek, and having with me the prince of boatmen, Jim R., lacked not in either fish or game. But duck and fish were not enough to satisfy, even in the abundance provided there by a lavish nature, and I cast about for some new diversion.

It was at this period that Jim suggested we should go down the river and secure the skeleton of a manatee we had discovered a month previous. It was just the thing, and we were soon sailing down river with a fair wind. It was about fifty miles, and we camped that night a dozen miles from our destination. When we awoke next morning we discovered that our whole stock of pork was missing. Further search revealed the tracks of a panther, and, connecting the circumstances, we were at no loss to account for the absence of the pork. The most aggravating circumstance was, that the theft had been committed while we had a dog in the camp, whose sole purpose was to guard our property. It was useless to follow up the trail, as it was soon lost, and we left camp and entered the Narrows, beneath the

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shade of India rubber and palm. The manatee we were in search of had been discovered in a decomposed state, so, as it was securely lodged in a bend of the channel, we had left it to the tender mercies of a coroner's jury of vultures, intending to return for it later. Now we had returned, and making our boat fast over the spot where we supposed the ivory lay, we proceeded to business. As the only method of getting it was by diving, and the water swarmed with the ugliest alligators ever seen by mortal man, there was no rivalry between Jim and myself—in fact, Jim desired to give me precedence; he was perfectly willing I should take the lead in the way of diving, and developed a new feature in his disposition. Around our camp fire he always manifested a disposition to secure a front seat when the pork and flapjacks came along, but now a change had come over him, and my impetuous Jim seemed inclined to resign the rôle of leader, and be content with that of follower. But I was not at all desirous of securing glory at his expense, and so he went overboard first and I followed. The water was about neck deep, and rather cold. Our mode of operation was to wade about, feeling the mud beneath us with our feet for the ivory. Occasionally we would assume the position of ducks feeding in shallow water, groping about the mud with our hands. With our heads under water we might have reminded a disinterested spectator —though there was not another white man in a radius of a dozen miles—of the ostrich who thought so long as his head was covered his extremities were secure. But we didn't think so, for we were constantly thinking of our unprotected parts, and we often wondered whether

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the saying that an alligator wouldn't bite a white man were true.

It was upon coming up from such a position as I have described that I heard a low growl from our dog, a huge old mastiff, whom we had left aboard the boat. Following the direction of his fixed and eager gaze, I saw, as soon as the water had cleared from my eyes, a huge, cat-like animal stealthily moving among the mangroves on shore. I remember getting a glimpse of a burning pair of eyes, and then I imitated the ostrich before alluded to, and stuck my head under water and started for the boat. Jim had seen the animal at about the same time, and although I started first for the boat, he had reached it first, being much nearer.

Snatching my double-barrelled breech-loader, and slipping in a couple of buckshot cartridges, he jumped into his breeches and then jumped ashore, and was far on the trail of panther and dog before I had equipped myself for the race. Putting on pants and moccasins, I took a large bowie knife, the only available weapon, and insanely followed on the trail. It was long and circuitous, but I finally found them—Jim and the dog—a mile or so from the boat. I knew from the silence of the dog, some time before I reached them, that the panther was treed, and did not need Jim's information to that effect. It was in a small hammock of an acre or so that they had brought him to bay, and after closely reconnoitring we concluded he would be likely to stay till dark, and that it would be best for one of us to return and get some more ammunition and the rest of our clothes. Accordingly, I remained guarding the hammock until Jim returned with the necessary articles. Taking courage, from a small stock we had

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by us in a small bottle, we proceeded to make a thorough and systematic search for the panther.

The hammock was in the pine woods, and was just such a one as is common in the Florida pine barrens—a collection of oaks and other deciduous trees, with an abundance of vines and undergrowth.

We proceeded but slowly, for neither of us cared to meet the animal without an introduction, and it was late in the afternoon when we approached the centre of the clump toward which we had been steadily working. We had held the dog back all this time, for fear he would cause the beast to take refuge in another hammock, but but no sooner had we reached this central clump of old oaks and tangled briers, than he dashed madly forward and wildly clawed at the bark of a huge old oak some forty yards away. A panther in a tree is a troublesome thing to see, especially after the sun has dipped below the horizon; and again, the color of a panther so assimilates with that of the rough brown bark that it takes a sharp eye to detect one, even when you know he is there.

Guided by Jim's finger, I saw two fiery eyes gleaming from over a large limb, close to the trunk of the tree. Ugh! how they pierced me. They seemed to burn me through and through. Following down I soon saw the animal's tail, nervously working from side to side. His body was hidden behind the tree.

"There" said Jim, "you take the gun and shoot just below his eyes. If you do that you'll likely hit him in the throat."

"No, Jim, I think you can do this business best; you see I am not not much in the panther line, anyhow."

"No, you be hanged! you can shoot better'n I can

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with that gun, and besides, you can hit him as he jumps, for you're good on the wing, you know. I'll stand ready to stick him when he falls, old boy, an' I'll fix him if you don't."

So saying, he handed me the gun and took the bowie. I always had thought I should like to kill a panther, and had often pictured to myself a panther in my clutches, with my left hand hold of his tongue and my right in the act of plunging a knife into his throat. But now the supreme moment had arrived I was actually shaking with fear, or something akin, and refusing the high honor of killing one. But I knew that, as Jim had said, it was best that I should start the panther up and leave to him the *coup de grace*. Settling myself to this, I tried, by a desperate effort, to quiet my nerves. Securing a position behind the trunk of a palmetto, I rested the gun against it and sighted just below those blazing orbs. It was an eventful moment. It was to fire or not to fire—to leave the panther unprovoked, or arouse a terrible destructive power that nothing but death would allay. My hand yet trembled, and I let the barrels fall; but, with a powerful effort, I held the sight upon the panther's throat again and fired. With the report came a howl of anguish and a rushing noise as the huge animal launched himself into the air. There were no shaking limbs now, but with nerves and muscles tense, I held my gun upon him, and stopped him midway his leap, as it were. I have shot birds when their flight was so swift that their wings seemed a misty film, but never, it seemed to me, had I such speed and velocity to overcome before.

He fell nearly at my feet, and the dog was upon him ere he had hardly touched the ground. The growling, snarling, and snapping that ensued was horrible beyond

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description, but it struck no terror to the heart of my guide, for, watching his opportunity, he rushed in and plunged the long bowie almost to the hilt in the panther's side. Groaning and gasping for breath, the animal tottered, fell upon his side and yielded at last, overcome by superior numbers. We skinned him that night by the light of a fire of light wood. The skull, with two broken fangs, a paw and the claws, are in my cabinet now, and they are ready to vouch for this story, even as the man was willing to show the pen he wrote the letter with. My first shot had broken two of his fangs, and the second had broken a fore-leg, besides wounding him internally.

The panther is a cowardly animal, and will not attack man. This refers to the Southern panther—but instances are well authenticated where it has followed women and children, evidently with murder in its heart. Indeed, I remember now an incident related by a settler, of a negro child being devoured by a panther, but cannot recall the locality of the occurrence. They are fond of hogs, however, and will often risk considerable to capture a good porker—a rarity, by the way, in Florida. The day before my arrival at the Kissimmee river a panther came up to a settler's cabin in broad daylight, and carried of a full-grown sow, the mother of a large family, before the eyes of the settler's wife and children. The next day dogs were gathered, and a hunt instituted that resulted in the death of the panther, a huge eight-footer.

Near Fort Drum, in the interior of Florida, panthers have been very troublesome of late years, and are often killed there. That they will kill dogs, I have the testimony of an old guide and hunter, who described to me

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an "accident" happening to his dog upon the very place where we then camped. He said he was camped there, had his mosquito bar pitched, and had gone to sleep. Something, he knew not what, awoke him, just in time to see a dark body leap over his bar and pounce upon the dog. There was a short struggle, and then the worthy guide was minus a good dog. He didn't take part in the fight, but was a quiet, if not disinterested, spectator.

Sometimes they will manifest the utmost contempt for man, and will seem to take delight in keeping him in suspense. An old "live-oaker" told me that he came upon two panthers in a narrow trail, and that they walked ahead of him to the shore of the river, where one of them sat down and refused to move. Upon his companion throwing a "chunk of light wood," at it, it merely started a little, and snarled in a way that convinced the two live-oakers that it "wasn't goin' to stan' no nonsense." They left him there. Another live-oaker, a chopper, was engaged in squaring a fallen tree, when a full-grown panther came up and quietly carried away his dinner, which lay upon the other end of the log. This act, though very gracefully and daintily done, so alarmed the man that he dropped his axe and ran into camp, a mile or more. But the panther devoured his dinner.

FRED BEVERLY.

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XVI.

THE ENVIRONS OF TALLAHASSEE.

THE City of Tallahassee, the capital of the State of Florida, is situated in Leon county, about thirty miles north of the Gulf of Mexico, and half-way between the eastern and western limits of the State. Tallahassee is an Indian word, and signifies "old fields." The present site of the city was perhaps long ago the corn-fields of the savages. It is situated upon the broad, flat top of a hill, and is about a mile in length, by three-eighths in breadth. Its people are hospitable, refined, polite, and very sociable; and the stranger visiting there will receive more attention than at any other city in the South. It is a very paradise for bachelors, on account of the number, the beauty, and the charming manners of the ladies. The climate is very pleasant, and the number of soft, warm "Indian summer" days during the winter, is very great—and, though a fire is necessary in the evenings, yet, during the day the visitor can remain almost entirely in the open air with comfort and pleasure.

To the sportsman, the prospect is admirable. In every direction, for miles from the town, are wide fields, which swarm with quail. A fair day's shooting—allowing the sportsman to take his breakfast at a reasonable hour, and start leisurely, returning for supper at dark—

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for a good shot, and with a good dog, is not less than from sixty to one hundred and forty birds. The coveys are all large, and often two or more are found in one field. In the neighborhood of the town are many small lakes, in which duck and other wild fowl are plentiful, while at Lakes Lafayette and Jackson, six miles distant, and some miles in extent, there is good fishing as well as good shooting. About two miles from town, and on a high hill, which lies between several small lakes, is a favorite resort for duck-shooters—as the birds are continually passing and repassing from lake to lake. There is abundance of accommodation in the city, and the young gentlemen take pleasure in giving the sportsman all necessary information and assistance. Horses and vehicles are readily obtained. Deer are often killed within a few miles of the town, as well as wild turkeys.

St. Mark's, but an hour's ride from the city by rail, is on the Gulf; and the fishing and wild fowl shooting is of the best. Boats and assistants are easily had.

One of the pleasantest trips, is a visit to the famous Wakulla Spring—which lies about sixteen miles from Tallahassee, almost due south—and out of which flows the Wakulla river, a stream a hundred feet wide, and three feet deep, with a two-mile current where it leaves the spring. The route, with the exception of a few miles near Tallahassee, is through the pine woods, which extend to the very edge of the spring; though, as the ground begins to fall, there is a considerable intermixture of other varieties of timber, and a heavy undergrowth. The Wakulla Spring is about fifty yards long, by seventy-five broad, and is famous for the transparency of its waters. Floating in a boat on its surface, one seems suspended in mid air—and, when the day is perfectly

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calm, the water smooth and the sun bright, the illusion is perfect. The ordinary depth of the spring is eighty-five feet, and objects on its bottom can be seen almost as plainly as if held in the hand. Visitors usually take with them small, round, bright pieces of tin, which appear like tiny mirrors lying on the bottom, which is smooth and covered with a fine white sand. On the western side is a broad ledge or cliff of rock, the top of which is sixty-five feet below the surface. At the edge of this cliff the water is black, and I found bottom at a little over one hundred and twenty-five feet. Out of this Gulf the stream seems to gush, and one can see the fish floating over in front of it, steadily maintaining their position—though the somewhat quick motion of the fins and tail show the resistance they are obliged to overcome.

The water is impregnated with limestone, and is icy cold. One or two persons who have experimented in swimming in this spring, after a few seconds' immersion, became so benumbed as to require assistance to get back into the boat. The sides of the spring are very steep; being almost perpendicular for some distance below the surface. The river leading from the spring is full of grass, and among this lie the fish. Fishing with a line is out of the question—but many are caught with a "gig."

There is a legend connected with the spring, which goes on to say that many years ago, long before the white man trod the shores of America, this spring was a little fountain, and was the favorite resort of a pair of mastodons. One day while standing at the spring, cooling themselves by throwing over their backs "trunkfuls" of the icy water, the ground suddenly gave way beneath their feet—and the ill-fated pair found themselves swim-

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ming in a lake of ice-cold water. Terrifically they "trumpeted," and frantically they strove to clamber out upon the bank—but the steep sides afforded no foot-hold—until benumbed and overcome with the cold, and feebly struggling, they sank, with their trunks lovingly entwined, to rise no more. As my fair informant remarked: "lovingly they had spent their lives together, and in death they were not divided." The bones of the ill-fated pair remained long at the bottom of the spring—a memento of their fidelity and their fate. Some years ago, some enterprising individuals succeeded in getting out their skeletons, which were large and perfect, and shipped them to New York. The vessel was wrecked during the voyage and they were lost.*

The country around Tallahassee is attractive and beautifully undulating. There are many fine views, and pleasant drives in almost any direction. All the varieties of forest vegetation peculiar to the country are abundant. The superb magnolia, with its glossy deep-green leaves and large cream-white flowers, the bay-tree, the live-oak, so famed for ship timber, the scarlet oak, the sweet gum, the sycamore, the long-leaved pine, the catalpa, the hickory, the beech, the wild plum and crab-apple, of size almost incredible until seen; the dogwood, whose large white flowers, and berries of vivid scarlet, far exceed in size those of its northern compeer; grape, and other vines of every variety and size; the yellow jessamine, which climbs the trees and overspreads their tops with its clusters, and hangs in graceful festoons from every branch, in a wealth of floral profusion which

* Chas. Lanman, Esq., in his "Wilds of America," says that the bones referred to were sent to Philadelphia by Geo. S. King, of Florida, and deposited in the museum there.—Ed.

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illumines its surroundings, and covers its forest supporters with a crown of glory. Along the fences and hedges the Cherokee rose—I may tell you its legend some day—clambers in wild luxuriance, its fair snow-white blossoms shining like stars in the dusk of the evening, as you ride along. The oleander, the Cape jessamine and the crêpe-myrtle, puny shrubs and hot-house plants at the North, here are trees, that grow to the height of twenty feet. The camellia, too, reaches the height of ten feet or more, and living in the open air, blossoms with a luxuriance unknown to its sisters of the northern conservatory.

But why say more. The lover of the rod and gun keenly appreciates all of nature's loveliness—and where is the beauty and delicacy of God's handiwork more manifest than in the "Land of Flowers"?

AUG. K. EGBERT.

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XVII.

PRIVATE DOUGHERTY AND THE BASS.

I CHEERFULLY contribute at this opportune season the following data, showing, first where big bass have been caught by me, and secondly, why I am sure they can be caught again.

First: Every steamboat captain who goes up the St. Johns river, Florida, will be able to point out where old Fort Butler was situated, some fifteen miles above Lake George, and on the south side of the river. About five miles above this spot, and on the south side of the river, another small river will be found emptying into it, between marked embankments, having a wild orange grove on the one side and on the other small trees and bushes. This river was called the Little Weekiwa when I fished in it; its mouth is quite open and prominent, and I think about eight rods across; its waters are clear and cool, and pass out into the St. Johns over a smooth and shelly bottom. Its depth is some ten feet or more, and its western bank good for camping, and landing heavy fish with pole and line. Fish directly across its mouth, and if you hit the proper time, I will warrant you fish that will make your arms ache to handle.

Second: Why I am sure they can be caught now. The reader will at once see from my description of the place that here at the mouth of this fine river must be a mag-

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nificent place for the big bass of the great St. Johns, some four hundred miles in length, in places miles broad, deep, abounding in small fish, lily pads, etc., to congregate annually for spawning and other purposes. But the proof of good fishing lies not in appearances always, for these are often very deceptive, as the fisherman well knows. No—better proof lies in the actual trials made here by myself and one other—Private Dougherty, of K company, second United States dragoons. He was the "Peter" of his company, and fished for over sixty men; and when I think of these times and recall the facts, it almost makes my now old gray hairs stand on end. This may be a weakness, 'tis true, but yet the tales lose none of their interest with me. I trust younger sportsmen will at least admire my veneration. If not, I am but the mirror of their fate, and true to life.

And now to my story, which is short, sweet, true, and very conclusive. With a slight preface, so as to reveal the scene behind the curtains, I will say, that in 1838, during the Florida war, I doffed the ever-memorable "gray and bullet-buttoned coat," for the more envied long-tailed blue. I was at once ushered into service by being stationed that fall, winter, and spring at the above-named post; then two days' time from any other civilized place, steamboat time at that, and as for "common time," in which I had been drilled, why, we had no logarithmic tables there to calculate it. Suffice it we were seventy strong right in the heart of Florida, and about ten days' travel from all signs of civilization. I landed here by "walking the plank" from a small steamboat, thence into the pine barren. Glorious, indeed! Story! your story, anon!

Well, one morning I went to inspect the company's

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mess and rations, when to my astonishment I found the sides of the mess room all covered over with bass split down on the back, and as large as codfish, besides the mess tables for sixty men were smoking with hot fish. What! thought I, am I on the coast of Newfoundland, among the cod fisheries of New England, or am I in Florida? I will inquire, perhaps I am in a dream. "Sergeant," said I, "you seem to have plenty of fish here; where did you get them?" He replied: "Dougherty is a fisherman, and he goes up the river every few days and catches what fish the men can eat." "Tell him I wish to see him." "Yes, Lieutenant," replied the sergeant, touching his cap. (Enter Dougherty) "Dougherty, where do you catch all these fish, and how do you do it?" "I catch them," said he, "up the river, with a line and hook; I troll for them. I first use a piece of white fat pork rind, cut thin, for a bait, and after this I use a white strip cut out of the belly of the fish, and about three inches long; these last longer and save the pork, and are just as good, if not better, I think." This was good news, as well as economy in pork rind. I decided to try them. The next day Dougherty and myself, armed with hook and line only sixty feet long, and a piece of pork rind sliced from the pork barrel, started off for the fishing grounds. Soon after passing a long line of lily pads on the right, we came to the mouth of the river above described, and took up a place in the centre of it. "Now, hold on," said I, "while I cut off a piece of this rind and bait my hook." This done, by hooking it at one end so it would play in the water, "Now," said I, "you row across," and away went my line by a cast at the same time, no sooner striking the water than—splash! up you go! about two feet

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into the air, white belly, tail, fins, and all a-flying down you come, shaking and dangling with a twitch. "Pull him in," said Private Dougherty, for I was a novice now, and had never caught a fish before by trolling. I obeyed his orders and soon had a big bass in the boat. The bait yet good, away I cast it again. No sooner done than—up she goes again! and into the boat I haul him—a monster bass, the boat meeting him full half-way; and soon over it goes again, and in comes another, and still over again, and still in another, and so on and so forth to the end of the chapter, with no change except to use the piece of belly for bait when my other was all gone. This sport continued for less than two hours, when finding my boat nearly loaded down, and my little fingers well cut and sore by hauling them in, I concluded to stop at the round number of fifty, and returned to the post. When I weighed my fish, or at least one of the smallest and largest, the smallest weighed four and one-half pounds and the largest fourteen and one-half pounds, giving a fair average of ten pounds, or five hundred pounds in all. This looks like large bass in the St. Johns river.

I was not then particularly fond of fishing, and never went to the place again, but Dougherty told me that he continued to catch them in this way for some time afterward, and until the weather got warmer, when they ceased biting there and went out into the main river, where he caught them, though much less abundantly.

I visited the place, I think about the 10th of March, when the oranges were yellow and ripe, and lying on the ground. Here, in my opinion, is the spot for Florida sportsmen. I think the bass spawn here annually, and

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the few that may be caught will make no difference. I do not learn that any settlers live near this spot. Land from the steamer, pitch your tent, and throw the fly or pull the trigger at your option. I am sure you will have rare sport, and to your full satisfaction.

H. W. MERRILL.

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XVIII.

THE PET BIRDS OF ST. AUGUSTINE.

THIS is a lovely day. The sun is bright and the air balmy—neither too warm nor too cool. I am writing by the open window. Everything is as still as if it were the Sabbath. Far out in the bay is a boat, in which sits a man, lazily fishing. A querulous crow flies by, hoarsely croaking, and the white wing of a gull gleams distantly in the sunlight. The old flag is gently floating in the soft south wind. The sky is blue, the waves are bright and glancing, and a general sense of laziness seems to pervade the air, and one feels like leaning on the sill and gazing out on the quiet beauty of the scene forever. In the distance, above the belt of dark-green trees, is the lighthouse, with its pure white tower pointing heavenward, like a tall church spire, and its blessed star of hope on the summit. Right below it and cresting the sand hills of Anastasia Island, is the long line of evergreen, with an occasional palm-tree, whose feathery fronds wave above the general mass of foliage, the very emblem of grace. To the south are the storehouses and buildings for the workmen engaged in erecting the new lighthouse, which, when completed, will stand one hundred and eighty feet above the water, with a light of the first order visible twenty-eight miles at sea. To the north extend the long line of breakers

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with their white-capped crests surging over the bar. Further north yet, the snow-white sand of the beach and the interminable line of verdureless "dunes" glisten in the sun. Nearer are the wide marshes, so infested with rattlesnakes that cattle cannot graze there. Here and there a few clumps of scrub relieve the brownish yellow of the marsh. Nearer yet is the bay, shimmering in the sun. On the shore near the sea-wall, the tide is down. A little gray-coated sand-piper comes tripping along the beach, "peeking" softly to itself, as if it enjoyed the sun, and perches upon a warm stone, dressing its feathers. Then comes the sea-wall—a monument of governmental patronage, and the favorite Sabbath evening promenade of Minorca's dark-eyed beauties. At its terminus, far to the north, loom up the massive towers and frowning battlements of Fort San Marco, the pride of the "ancient city." How peaceful the scene, for peaceful looking it is, notwithstanding the old fort looms in the distance, with racks full of great cannon-balls and field-pieces on the parade in the foreground. The day was so lovely that, having a few hours' leisure, I thought I would go and see "the birds," so I called on the Colonel, who is a capital sailor, and finding him disengaged, we started in his skiff (ycleped by the jokers the Snorting Sea-horse), and sailed up the bay about a mile beyond the town, passing the Old Fort and running in among the bayous which intersect the wide marshes.

Have you ever heard of the birds? I copy a slip from the St. Augustine "Press" which will explain the matter:

"We witnessed a novel and beautiful sight a few days ago at the farm of Mrs. H., situated on the North river, about two miles above the city. Mrs. H., in the

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course of a few months, has succeeding in taming the wild birds that fly about the place. While we were in the house, Mrs. H. went out to the door and called to the birds, which were then, in the middle of the day, in the adjoining forest. In a few moments a dozen or more blue-birds and mocking-birds came flying around her. She then came into the house and handed each of our party a raisin, which we were requested to hold out in our fingers. We remained still for a few minutes, when the birds hopped in at the door, flew upon our hands, and picked the raisins from our fingers. We were astonished, and could not help wondering the more when we were informed that none of these birds had been caged, but were thus tamed by the gentleness and art of this lady."

As it may interest some of your readers, and conduce, perhaps, to both pleasure and profit, and aid the cause of the feathered tribes by inducing some of our gentle and fair friends to aid in their civilization and domestication, I will give the result of my trip, which will show the power of continued gentleness and kindness with these beautiful denizens of our woods.

After landing, a pleasant drive of a mile or two, over sandy roads and through a thick chaparral, brought us to the little farm, but we found its occupants absent, so missed seeing the birds, which, as it afterward turned out, would have been the case even had Mrs. H. been at home, for her feathered visitors were of those varieties which migrate from the north and had not yet returned. We were driving back, a good deal disappointed, when on the road we met the old lady and her son, so we stopped and held some pleasant talk. I told her I had a dear friend in the distant North who had read of her

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birds with interest, and was anxious to know how she tamed them. I added that my friend loved the birds, but could not succeed in winning them in their wild state to feed from the hand as she had done. Mrs. H. seemed much pleased at this, and smilingly began to tell me how it had been brought about. She is a placid looking old lady about sixty-five, but young and active for her years. She and her son, a young man of twenty-five, had bought a tract of land about two miles north of this city (St. Augustine), put up a shingle house, and there they lived. They are farmers, sell berries, corn, potatoes, poultry, etc., and thus obtain a comfortable livelihood. Their house is on the edge of a bayou leading to the North river, just between the marshes and the woods, on comparatively high ground; a pretty site, with a fine outlook toward the sea. They were very lonely there, however, no near neighbors and but few passers by.

"It all came of my being so lonely," said Mrs. H., "and"—I give her own words as nearly as I remember—"for the sake of company I began to make friends with the birds, though the beginning of our friendship was rather accidental, too. I always threw out the crumbs from the table, and as I did so I noticed a great many birds would come and pick them up. They were so pretty and trusting, I thought it would be a pleasant thing to have them round me, so I determined to make a regular habit of feeding them every day, and I began to throw my crumbs and handsful of grain far from the house toward the grove, each day a little nearer and nearer till I got them right 'round the door. All this time I was very careful not to frighten my little friends. I had no children about the house, and did not keep either a dog or cat, so the quiet could not be broken—

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there was nothing to alarm or startle, and the birds soon became fearless. Then," she added, "my son noticed what I was doing and joined me, and by degrees, the birds learned to know him and trust him as they did me. After they had been feeding 'round the door for some time, I put some of the crumbs in my hand and held it perfectly still. Then they hopped up and began to eat from my fingers. I knew I had their hearts then. Finding I never tried to catch them, they came into the house, twittered about and fed without fear. I now began to call them, and as the little creatures knew this meant food (for I never disappointed them), they learned to know my voice and came readily at my call."

Mrs. H. informed me that this continued for some time, when strangers heard of it, and began to drive out to see her pets; perfect quiet was enjoined, and the touching or catching of any bird was carefully prohibited. The little creatures were perfectly fearless, coming at her call, no matter who was there, and fluttering and twittering about her. Many people had been there and seen it, and, said she, "I have received many letters inquiring my method of so completely taming wild wood birds, but there is nothing about it, no charm, only kindness and perfect freedom from harm or annoyance." The birds went north in the spring, and this had been the first year Mrs. H. tried feeding them, and accident and loneliness had brought about this pleasant friendship. "I do hope it won't be broken off," she added earnestly, "I want the birds to come back. I have learned to love them, so I could not bear them to forget me."

Such was her story. I assured her that many, if not all her birds, would return, and very likely bring their little ones with them, that such were their habits, and

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if my friend came to this land of flowers, we would be sure to remember and come to see both herself and her birds. I must not forget to add that I asked her what kind of birds were her guests. "I can hardly tell you," she said, "there are so many that I do not know; but I see plenty of mocking-birds among them, blue jays, blue-birds, robins, and little brown birds, which are very sociable." By these last I recognized the friendly little sparrows so familiar to us at home. She also told me they expected to build a new house, and she wondered if the birds would consider that a safe home, and come there too.

So we parted, she to her lonely home and we to the barracks. But the memory of that scene returns pleasantly to me—the quiet road-side shaded by the tall Florida pines—the rough-cast and shaggy horse—and the gentle old lady sitting among her baskets, with her son by her side. I seem to see now her face lit up and shining with sweetness and peacefulness as she talked of her pets. That countenance, radiant with the beauty of a serene, kindly spirit, that gentle voice I vividly recall; and as I do so, I do not wonder that the very birds of the air learned to trust and love her. For all this told a story that even they could not fail to read.

But I have not taken my friend there yet, nor do I know whether the hope of the good old lady has ever been realized, and her friends (the birds) returned to brighten and cheer her declining years, and meet their kindly welcome. Long before I shall be able, in this ever-changing army life, to revisit "the ancient city," the old lady will doubtless have gone to her rest. May the birds, as in the sweet nursery tradition of "the Babes in the Wood," hover over her grave and lovingly scatter leaves above her peaceful breast.

A. K. EGBERT.

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XIX.

STEAM-YACHTING ON THE ST. JOHNS.

THERE is a combination of pleasure in boat life that is unrivalled, and it is a matter of regret that, with our magnificent inland waters, some among them attractive at every season, so little effort has been made to render more simple and economical the methods for enjoying them. Our steamboats are perfection, and he who will go by time card, and with half the population of a city as companions, may be wafted along like a prince, and find at hand every luxury of life; but if he will go or tarry at will, hasten or linger as tempted at the moment, there is less chance to do it, with any present arrangements, than on the Nile or Amazon.

Fleeing a year ago from the cold, your correspondent found himself steaming rapidly away from one of the long wharves of the lower St. Johns, on a small, impetuous little yacht, one of the busy, bustling kind, imbued with the restless spirit that small things usually possess and exhibit, to show that, after all, size is not everything.

It was a day for idling, and the rapid puff was not in harmony; so, leaning over the small bow deck, that just held a bell and two easy chairs, the order was given to old Paul, the well-known pilot, to slow up, and Paul conveyed the same to the engineer, when the sharp ripple at the bow lost its rustle, the engine breathed more

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comfortably, and with a wide, lazy wake spreading far behind on the golden river, we laid back in our seats, and determined to abandon Northern haste, and learn laziness in earnest—in fact, to do nothing as hard as possible. And the lesson was very easy. The slow-drifting clouds, the currentless river, the gentle wind, and all about was peaceful and free from suggestion of haste; and coming fresh from driven clouds and hurrying storms, it was enough to take in sunshine and repose, leaving for another time action and progress.

All that surrounds one at the South is suggestive of, and in unison with, rest; and nothing is more grateful. At the North it is not so; energy and haste seem the spirit of animate and inanimate life. The wind blusters and frets in an eager way, while the clouds drive on as if their haven was not yet found. The surf on the rocky shores is not the low, long tone of the strand; it essays the conquest and crumbling of the rock-bound coasts, while the streams hasten on their way to the sea, cutting corners like messengers, and turning a whirl here and there with an expression of relief at getting away from a temporary delay in the quiet pond. And are we not too much the same? Do not Northern men wear away in efforts to save time, and never command leisure? Are not brains mazed by efforts to save and systematize that only increase complexity? Do not our women assume care to preserve and protect their beautifully furnished homes, until their chairs and fragile china outlast their weary lives? Can minds always engrossed really see what is laid broadcast of beauty and interest any more than ruffled waters can reflect the sky or beautiful shores; and does not our laboriously assumed discipline of habit finally become a power that cannot be shaken

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off, even if weakened vitality warns that it must be done? But our bows were unbent, and our surrender to the peaceful influences was unconditional. The broad, quiet river bore no evidence of the centuries that have passed since the first adventurers explored it for the fountain of youth—a fountain that, undiscovered for man, assuredly maintains the evergreen vigor of this remarkable stream. Known longer than any river on the continent, it is the same to the eye as when the first boat passed over it. At hardly any point are there breaks in the line of foliage that crowds to the water's edge; and miles and miles did we pass on, seeing no evidence that the swells from our boat were not the first that set the water-lilies nodding a friendly welcome.

The lower river is too wide for game, being often ten miles from shore to shore—quite sea-room enough for a yachtman's skill, and water enough for a good sized craft on nearly all stretches. From this wide water we turned into Black creek, where we were promised shots at alligators. This is a very beautiful stream, about one hundred yards wide. The alligator is very much like our northern turtles in his manner of life; and, like them, enjoys sunshine on his scaly form. We slowed the engine and went on very quietly, keeping near the sunny bank of the river, and half forgetting, at times, our purpose, in admiration of the same. The alligator is not easily seen by a novice among so many new forms to catch the eye. Their scaly backs, when dry, are precisely the color of bark, and lying on or by fallen trees, their form assimilates so closely to the decaying trunks, that we were unable to distinguish them at first, even when our small imp-of-all-work would grimace like a monkey in efforts to point them out. We did not admit

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with candor that we did not see them, but bravely fired away, and kept up an expression of entire wisdom, even when, in response to hurried shots, chips flew from logs that were not very near the splash made by the escaping saurian. One or two were hit, and when wounded gave a display of power that increased our respect for them. Smashing about, they made the foam and water fly like a propeller wheel on a tear, but almost invariably retained enough vitality to get to the bottom, where the body remains in the mud and grass until, expanded by decomposition, it rises to be food for swarms of turkey-buzzards. We continued this rifle practice for some time, until the long shadows covered both banks, when the alligators, as dependent upon sunshine as butterflies, went into their slimy homes. Then we turned, to reach the open river before dark, let on more steam, and laid aside our rifles to enjoy the scene. It was wonderfully fair. Foliage of new forms pressed out over the water; vines, laden with bloom, hung, like Narcissus over the flood, lost in their reflections; ducks swam hastily on before us, drawing a wake that became long rays of light, and, overtaken, took long circles back to the quiet scenes we were leaving; while, on the topmost branches of tall trees, turkey-buzzards sat in rows, waiting like ghouls for death and decay to lure them down. They were unmindful of rifle-balls; safe in worthlessness they surveyed the scene their repulsive forms marred, and when the shadows were almost as dark as their sable wings, we were glad to enter the open river. Over the bar, with full steam, we pressed on as long as we could see; and then, tied to a deserted wood wharf for the night, lighted up our little cabin, had our supper, a few glasses of social wine, and turned in to dream of semi-tropical life.

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These piers are often carried a long way into the broad river before reaching water of sufficient depth for a steamboat, so shallow are many of the bays, and they do not endure long in a climate where heat and moisture expedite decay, and where, under water, various borers are ever at work running their galleries through and through even the gummy pitch-pine logs.

With some ingenuity very comfortable beds were improvised from cushions, rugs, etc., and despite the hot breath and loud respirations of the furnace and boiler, very near our heads, we made out a comfortable night on our steam tug. At daybreak a fog hung over the stream, and we were forced to await its clearing. It did not delay long, but rolled away like a curtain, and opened a morning view of the scenes that we were so reluctant to have overshadowed the night before. Our cook was busy in a caboose a little smaller than a watch-box, from which drifted a fragrant odor of Java as we came on deck and freshened up in pails of clear water, and ate our fruit before breakfast. We were drifting along, with summer all around—air, water, and sky all full of warmth. Our will our law, to go, to stop, hasten or linger as we fancied at the moment, and in unison with the soothing influences of the scene we gave ourselves up to vigorous idleness. After our meal, as our crew was small, your correspondent took the wheel while the captain enjoyed his breakfast. The pilot-house was low and open. Just in front, in easy camp-chairs, sat the rest of our little party smoking, with their guns on a cable box in front, all of us feeling little interest in getting anywhere, the one fact of gliding along amid slowly varied scenes being sufficient. It was indeed luxurious. Our black imp was at hand to respond to every wish and

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attend to every want that might have caused greater exertion than winking, and we were convinced that man's natural bent was laziness, from the very rapid and complete surrender of three hurrying, worrying, nervously active Northerners to the *abandon* of the Sunny South.

There was but little game in sight as yet. We were on the highway, where from the forward decks of every steamer a fusillade of small-arms is kept up on every living thing, from alligators to the useful buzzards that clustered upon the floating carrion. Every man and boy feels called upon to do some "sporting" in Florida, and all are armed with as varied a lot of guns and pistols as would adorn an arsenal. The rapid movement of the river boats prevents any very serious results to the animals and birds, unless when now and then the ricochet of a ball kills a cow in the woods; but it amuses all but the timid people, and is a customer of very great value to the Union Metallic Cartridge Company.

The birds seem well informed as to the range of modern arms. The stately and beautiful snowy herons spread their white wings only when rifles are raised, and the less beautiful alligator seems to know just when to launch himself to save his scaly sides from harm. The animal life of the lower St. Johns is not of the simple kind, but the denizens of this Broadway know a thing or two, and are not to be taken in by any cheap tricks. Consequently our guns were idle, and nothing aroused us from the quiet state of enjoyment that is so valuable to the strained minds that have been keeping pace with the restlessness of Northern life.

The afternoon found us at Pilatka, where the larder was reinforced, ice purchased, and a boat obtained. At twilight we pushed on, turning into the narrower and

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more picturesque channels, where the forest crowded out to the water's edge, and sprays of flowering vines hung far over the flood, lost in vain admiration of their mirrored beauty and grace.

The water was deep even to the shore, and we cut the bends of the stream close under the foliage that rustled with the breeze made by our motion, while views of remarkable beauty opened every moment before us, each in deeper shade and more mysterious beauty as the rapid darkness came on. As later every form on shore was lost in the dense blackness of night, it became a wonder to us how old Paul could thread the devious and narrow channel; but on we sped, only halting inshore once to let one of the great river boats go by. The huge thing came panting like a leviathan breathing flame; and with wide-open furnaces casting broad bars of light over the water, and rows of colored signal lamps far above the bright cabin windows, she made a striking scene against the night as she sped on, bearing a gay throng of pleasure-seekers to the upper river.

We were not anxious, however, to get on. There was a wealth of beauty by the way, that few on the great stream would see, and after feeling our way for a time, old Paul rang to "stop her!" "back her," and our little boat drifted against a wood wharf, that no one but our pilot could have found, with no sign to mark it under the forest blackness; and here, tied up to a decayed dock, we did not envy the passengers going "on time."

Former experience told how there would be a rush for seats, and a scramble for food, and a long cue of tired men and women waiting to learn from a patient purser that there were no more state-rooms, no more beds on the floor, and no more blankets for a curl up under the

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dining tables. We were not at the mercy of negro stewardesses, nor to be snubbed by magnificent waiters; we were as independent as chimney-sweeps in a crowd. Your correspondent was admiral of the fleet (steamer and two skiffs), sailing-master, "bo'sun tight and midshipmite," and chief of ordnance (one Scott and one Remington), while Madame was in command of our cabin passengers (maid and one child), and reigned supreme over a culinary department consisting of two spirit-lamps at night and a fire on shore in the day time.

Just at the time we tied up, hot tea was singing on one lamp, hot soup (thanks to Liebig), on the other; and with rolls, devilled meat, and canned luxuries, there was a good supper laid away, and the events of the day came in pleasant retrospect through the cheering medium of sparkling wine.

At dawn we clambered on to the old wharf. A wood road ran back from it through the forest to a settler's home. Birds were singing gayly, among them our familiar summer friends; but many strange notes came from the low growth. Following what seemed to be the sound of an axe, a woodpecker was found, an earlier workman than the lazy "crackers." It was one of the large fellows that are sometimes seen on southern trees; as large as a teal duck, a gay, handsome bird, with a bill like iron and a head that enables them to exercise the feat, long considered impossible, of sawing wood with a hammer. Ducks, herons, water turkeys, ospreys, and other birds followed the narrow water in their flight, shying above the tree tops as they found us occupying their solitude, and saying hard things of us in their own way, while high up on a venerable cypress limb sat several ducks, rather an unusual sight, and there they sat while

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we made a fire and cooked our breakfast, and only moved off when a ball went very near them.

Nothing can equal this mode of enjoying the southern rivers. From the lofty decks of the steamers a great deal is seen, but every moment one is hurried ruthlessly away from some spot where there is every temptation to linger, and then left to while away hours at some landing where preceding crowds have gathered every flower, and alarmed every bird with pistols and parasols.

After a leisurely breakfast on shore, as free from care as gypsies, we went on board; put easy chairs on deck, laid our guns before us, and steamed on through scenes of great beauty and variety, now and then getting a duck, which was picked up and enjoyed by our men, who cooked them in the furnace under the boiler.

Above Pilatka the river becomes less lake-like. There is more perceptible current, and it bends and drifts by islands, when, the channel being nearer the shore, more of the forest is seen. Unbroken woods and ranks of tall stems come quite to the water's edge; indeed the huge cypress trees stand in the margin, and surrounded by the upward pointed roots, rising from one to four feet high, called knees, they give a novel appearance to the ground, while overhead the long gray drapery of Spanish moss adds an impression that these are bearded woods of unknown age, hoary and ancient as Druid oaks. Fresh and bright are the grand magnolias, every dark-green leaf polished until it is silver in the sunlight; and as a new form to the Northern eye the tall palmettoes raise their tufted crowns of huge leaves. On dry ground the live-oak assumes superb proportions, its low spreading form and broad shade being in grateful contrast to the rigid formality and upright lines of the southern

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pines, so abundant and so monotonous. Beneath these trees is a varied and interesting growth of forms very strange in contrast with the small thin undergrowth of the North. The huge leaves of the cabbage palmetto, five or six feet in diameter, are very handsome, with their crimped fan-like radiating form, and the saw-palmetto shrub is very similar. A wealth of small growth and vines is mingled in the green tangle, while parasitic plants, mistletoe, and air-plant, form mid-air clusters foreign to any our hardwood hills present.

About noon we reached Lake George and found it very rough, but leaving the channel we followed an unusual route through the islands and ventured out, our yacht rolling a good deal, but we soon came under the west shore and found shelter. About midway on the shore is one of the wonderful springs that are so beautiful. Leaving the yacht, we poled in a flat skiff over a shallow bar, and up the stream that flows from the spring. The entrance was among lilies called bonnets by the natives, and they were swarming with duck and rail; while in the water, that was as clear as air, were shoals of fish, bass, mullet, long, savage-looking gar-fish and huge cat-fish. They would not bite, but were easily punched with an oar, and with a spear numbers could have been obtained. Here and there lay alligators, eyeing us wickedly, and they were far more bold than in the main river. On the low points—resembling the spirituelle as completely as the alligators represent the infernal—were stately, snowy herons, the most beautiful feature of all this sunny land. Following the dark thread of water through a profusion of semi-aquatic growth, we entered the forest until it overreached the narrow water, and was, in all its beauty, repeated in the

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calm flood below. The long gray moss hung almost to its reflection, and in the long vista all mingled into a confusion of waving form and shadow that concealed the water line, making a scene as indefinite and unreal as a dream. All kinds of birds and animals fluttered on before us or stole away into the woods. The grotesque snake-birds, or water turkeys, wriggled and stared, and tumbled off their perches with a helpless splash into the water, as if overcome with astonishment, and would next be seen with two or three inches of snake-like head and neck, going rapidly by. Precisely do they resemble a small swimming snake, and one can hardly believe that there is so large a bird under the surface. In the dim light that found its way through the huge leaves, we came upon a congress of owls, assembled, beyond doubt, in the mysteries of some ancient order of Minerva, and never was so much wisdom so solemnly arrayed. Silent, dignified, and conservative, doing nothing lightly, committing themselves to no unmatured ideas, even and temperate, what body could equal them? I had seen less manifest self-respect in the great and august men who eat peanuts in the beautiful chambers at Washington. Silently we gazed mutually; on my part a conviction of trespass became uncomfortable, and I was about framing an apology in long words of Greek derivation when the gray wings opened and the whole party flitted silently away, merging into the smoke-colored moss like a transformation scene.

Life abounds in these retreats. Here the wood duck winters in solitude, curlew sweep along in flocks, coot and rail run among the sedge, deer come shyly down to drink, or, frightened by the puma, plunge in and seek refuge in swimming. Under the bonnets are voracious

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wide-mouthed bass, called trout by the natives, who know not our clear northern waters nor the bright-hued fish that enliven them; and when the sun is bright, huge gar-fish, or alligator gar, long-nosed fellows, bask near the surface. Near springs where the waters are clear the study of aquatic life is very interesting. In one such stream, with a bright sandy bottom, I saw more varieties of fish than I can describe or name. Among them, in groups, were fish like pike, from one to two and three feet long. The gar were abundant, and four to six feet in length, going off like arrows, leaving a swirl like a propeller. In deeper spots clustered bass, a spotted fish I could not learn the name of, and fish called silver fish, while flitting along like bats, raising little clouds of sand at each stroke of their liver-colored wings, were electric rays, or stingarees. Under our boat, too, undulated the water moccasin, eyeing us angrily, and darting out a forked tongue most viciously. At another time, in one of these bayous near Enterprise, while paddling along, I shot a small alligator, some four feet long. The ball tipped and cut his skull, and, as my excellent boatman July said, killed him. Poking him up from the bottom we took him guardedly aboard. He was seemingly very dead, so his shiny form was placed under the bow deck, over which I stood, shooting at gar-fish, hoping to get one. I had forgotten the fellow, when I was astonished by a smashing under my feet, and with a jump over July made my escape into the stern, where a lady was sitting, just in time to save my legs from a rasp of his well-aimed tail. Out he came, smashing and spoiling for a muss, his long mouth open, and an unpleasant look of mischief in his bloody head and eyes. There were just then some amazing ideas

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suggested. Jumping overboard was going from the alligator frying-pan into a fire of sting rays, electric eels, and moccasins. Shooting him was a pleasant and revengeful idea, but it meant blowing a hole in the bottom of the boat. The old story of the natural histories reminded me that it was the proper thing to jump on his back and hold up his fore legs; but I was at the wrong end of him, and riding one without a saddle is not a thing to do even with the spur of necessity. It was rather close. The boat was not as long as we wished it was, and we had exhausted our retreat, but, master of the situation, he waddled on with an air of conquest and extermination until July met him bravely and punished him with the butt of an oar until he was again stunned. We had lost confidence in killing him, and to be safe tied him overboard and towed him to a landing, where he recovered his fine disposition under a system of annoyance from all the visitors, and finally gave evidence of it by biting a man. When I heard this I said nothing of his being my pet, and due justice was meted him.

Injury from alligators is very uncommon, but they are at times very fierce. A gentleman going to recover a duck, shot on the upper St. Johns, saw an alligator seizing it, and poured a charge of shot into his head, when the injured and infuriated beast turned and bit a large piece, gunwale and all, from the skiff. Their power is very great, and when wounded they give evidence of it, thrashing and crushing all about them. I shot one through the head on Six Mile creek, and he leaped from the ground until he looked as high as a horse. Heavy and awkward as they seem, they are not to be approached unguardedly, and although always ready to escape, if prevented they are very vicious.

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Half a mile from the lake, the stream ended in a curve under a high bank, and here by hard rowing we found the spring, and looked down into a white walled chasm through water that seemed too ethereal to support our skiff. It was a dizzy overlook down into this deep pool, where long weeds writhed and swayed forty or fifty feet below us in the swell of the current, and where shoals of huge fish would sweep out from under rocks and be swept rapidly about like shadows. The water rose with such force as to make a high boiling centre, where skilful rowing could poise a boat, only to slide away with a rapid balloon-like motion that was not at all pleasant. Fine palmettoes had surrounded this wonderful pool with a fit and beautiful shade, but they were just then a heap of smouldering ashes, having been cut away for cotton ground that might better have been taken from the unlimited forest beyond the small clearing. Vandal hands have rarely marred a more weird scene, nor ignorance more surely damaged the value of a rare possession; but so it is in Florida; all hands, from the jewelled one that wrote its owner's name in a *font* at St. Augustine, to the "cracker's" horny palm, are against the ancient, the curious, and the beautiful; and ere long the cliffs will bear quack medicine names, and the old walls will fall before want of taste, and give away to *pine fences*, as *has* the old and mysterious "Treasury wall" at St. Augustine. (A disgraceful fact.)

The tropical character of this noble river is chiefly seen above Lake George. North of this lake the northwest winds, the cold storm winds of the country, pass only overland from the frozen north, and in mid-winter sometimes bring a very unpleasant chill, one that renders orange culture precarious, blighting in some years the

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new buds; but south of this the winds having any westerly direction pass over more or less of the Gulf, and are disarmed by the warmth and moisture of that body of water of their blighting chill and dryness, and about Enterprise snow and frost are practically unknown; palms, palmettoes, bananas, and orange trees assume forms of vigor that render them very beautiful to the Northern eye, and the refugee from winter finds an assured promise of gentle air and golden sunshine.

The river is very crooked, bending sharply around points, cutting deeply into the banks, forming deep boiling pools, where fish are seen breaking constantly. The shores are usually low; a point ten feet high is known as a bluff, and such are sought by settlers for homes, possessing all the freedom from miasma, insects, and dampness that can be expected where the sun of almost perpetual summer breeds during many months a full crop of annoyances. The driest and most desirable places are found upon the shell mounds, where one strata upon another of shells form elevations of very considerable extent. These shell formations are of great interest, and puzzle the keenest minds with their layers of different shells, each distinctly defined in character, and differing in a marked form from the next.

The water-worn river banks show long and perfect sections of this character, and the strata are plainly seen in even and distinctly marked lines, not always level, but extending in long, unbroken elevations and depressions; showing that some disturbing upheavals have raised and lowered the deposited shells after they were imbedded in their present order.

Some of the strata, lying perhaps six inches in thickness, are composed of bivalve shells almost exclusively,

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much crushed and broken, but cemented quite firmly; other strata are without shells of this form, being composed of conical, convolute shells of about one inch on each angular side; but these differ again—in some the shells are fresh, but little broken, and not firmly cemented; in others crushed in fine fragments, and strongly united with the lime made by their partial decomposition. All these varieties may be seen overlying one another in a vertical height of four or five feet, and the different bands of color form lines that are visible as far as the face of the formation is exposed.

Upon these shell lands there are found numerous conical mounds, regular in form, rising from ten to thirty feet, evidently of human origin, supposed to have been, like the pyramids of Egypt, burial places for the distinguished dead of some race that has left no other record. The arrow-heads, axes, and other works of rude art, found in these mounds, are those of the Stone Age, which on this continent is extended to the present time among some remote Indian tribes; but some of these implements are found imbedded in a conglomerate so firm and stone-like that they convey to the mind of the ethnologist an impression of as remote antiquity as surrounds the bone caves and gravel deposits of France.

A great deal of learning has been exhausted upon these remains; but full examination has not yet been made, and many links in the chain of unwritten history may be supplied when a full comparison of these mounds, and the works they contain, is made with the corresponding discoveries of the Old World.

As the more minute peculiarities of our pre-historic ancestors are learned, there is no safe limit to assume of the unravellings of the maze that surrounds the deeply

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interesting questions of unity or diversity of races; and it is not unlikely that secrets are hidden in the shell mounds of Florida that may, when discovered and interpreted in the broad light of future knowledge, tell many a curious tale of wandering tribes and far-fetched arts and customs.

Half lost in vain theories and surmises, aroused by these peculiar remains, gun and rod were not unfrequently laid aside, and our minds given up to the romantic associations of the first voyagers who here sought the fountain of youth, carrying so much of woe and cruelty with them that it is fortunate for the present that they did not find any elixir of the kind; and to the more vague but pleasant fancies of the race that still earlier possessed this alluring land, and roamed freely, with no more idea of a coming and overcoming race than occurs to us now in our period of supremacy.

But this is drifting, and we would not be left without anchorage in the realms of speculation. We really went rapidly against the stream, and after a long day of full enjoyment tied our craft to a bank, and in our small but snug cabin made pleasant plans for the morrow.

Our third day on the little steamer found us among the prairies that lie on either side of the river, below Lake Monroe. They were low plains, with groups of trees like islands, and long rows of stately palmettoes defining the curves and retracings of the idle river, reminding us of the pictures of Eastern scenes of desert and palms. Herds of half-wild cattle were seen upon them, and sometimes a wild turkey would seek cover, not by flight, but by running like the wind. A little back from the river, on wet places out of rifle-range, were groups

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of white herons, the most stately and beautiful of birds, and great flocks of large curlew, while now and then gannets would spread their huge black-and-white wings, and seek quiet further apart from the river. No bird is so showy and conspicuous as the gannet, and it was long our ambition to get one for the plumage, but they were very wary, and only settled down in wet places, remote from any cover of trees or brush. Fortune, however, at last did better for me than patience or perseverance (pardon any imputation in favor of the fickle goddess), for, while rowing in a skiff, a flock, alarmed by a steamer, came laboring over the river, urging their way with powerful pinions against a gale of wind. They saw us, and tried to steer clear by turning their course several points into the wind, but they made too much leeway to save their distance, and one fellow came down before my gun, and sent up a cloud of spray from the river in his fall.

"Get 'um quick!" exclaimed old July, my faithful boatman, "or an alligator may carry him down;" and get 'um quick we did, bringing in as magnificent a mass of green, black, and white plumage as nature ever adorned a bird with, arousing some speculations as to what a great economy would result, and what a vast amount of envious and toilsome strife and ambition would be saved, had poor bare humanity been as comfortably and superbly clothed, without the toil of the needle, or the costly fabrics of fashion. These reflections did not impress July, who at once explained his "get 'um quick" counsel, as inspired by an experience that had impressed him very deeply. A gentleman hunting from Enterprise, shot a duck which fell in the water. As he was about taking it in, a large 'gator

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appropriated the bird. The gentleman in turn gave the beast a peppering of shot for his sauce, enraging him, without any serious injury, when he turned on the boat and took out a piece of the side, gunwale and all, so damaging it that they only made their way home in it by careening the broken side high out of water. These ill-mannered fellows often deprive the hunter of game that falls in the water, and the foregoing incident teaches the imprudence of irritating them with shot.

The fishing about the outlet of Lake Monroe is very good, but gar and catfish play the mischief with trolling gear, and carry away spoons most annoyingly. Bass are the best fish obtained. In one of the eddying pools I took bass so rapidly, that in less than half an hour the bottom of the skiff was alive with them, which, to avoid waste, were given to the steward of a steamboat, and abundantly supplied the table for a hungry crowd of tourists.

In the spring time the herons assume, to adorn their season of love-making, a plumage of remarkable beauty. It commences at the base of the neck, and extending backward between and over the wings, the long, airy plumes of dainty feathery sprays hang down gracefully behind the bird, and give a very stylish addition, *à la panier*, to a bird that never saw a fashion-plate, and has no trouble with any laundress. To obtain these exquisite decorations for the race so sadly neglected by nature in regard to the adornments so lavished on the inferior creations, these "angel birds" are assiduously hunted, and are consequently so wild, that only by strategy can they be shot on any of the borders of the river. From our deck we noticed that numbers of blue, white, and lesser herons alighted very constantly upon two iso-

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lated trees, standing at the end of a shallow water-way that extended from the river into the prairie; so, with the hope of gaining some shots, we ordered a halt. The steamer was tied to a tree, and we launched a skiff and paddled through the water-lilies, or "bonnets" (as the huge leaves are called), starting flocks of duck, rail, and birds, and disturbing the siestas of numerous alligators and turtles. The only shelter was under some small water-growing bushes, where we hid ourselves as well as we could, draping our hats with Spanish moss, and disposing it about, for concealment. After a time all the turmoil we had caused ceased. The ducks came, one by one, and dodged about under the reeds and lily leaves, while inquisitive blackbirds flitted near with impertinent airs, and chaffed our ideas of concealment with unbounded slang. An alligator, that had been out sunning himself where our boat laid, came up without a ripple, and eyed us with long curiosity as interlopers, and drifted almost against the boat. But we were after herons, and would only shoot them, after the manner of the Western man, who, "when he went a cattin' went a cattin'," and would not accept a bass or pike in lieu of the wide-mouthed bull-head. Animal life was abundant all about, with little evidence of fear, and, watching it, it was easy to realize how deeply engrossed such naturalists as Audubon became in thus studying birds and animals when free in their own haunts. Nothing seemed aware of us but the herons. They came from remote points, and seemed about to perch on the old trees, where so many were seen, but swept by and went on to other retreats. It was hardly possible for them to discover us, and we could not divine any cause for their wary movements unless they were warned by the angry scolding of

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the blackbirds that hovered about with incessant sharp cries. A shot or two reduced these pests to comparative silence, when a blue heron sailed up, poised for a moment on a bare limb, and then fell lifeless into the pool below. Hoping for other shots, we did not gather it in, but it was not long before an alligator slowly swam toward the dead bird, and would probably have carried it away but for the arrival of a Mead explosive ball in his head. He churned the water for a moment like a propeller wheel, and then sought the bottom to die among the weeds; and again all was quiet. But we waited in vain; herons sailed about over the marshes, but none came near, until, weary and sunburned, we poled back to the yacht, glad to get claret and ice.

Our plan was to go above Lake Monroe, but the water was too low on the bar, and our boat could not get over. We visited Mellonville, where shad were being taken in enormous quantities; and then anchored abreast the site of the old Enterprise Hotel, and landed, to visit once more, after several years' absence, the Blue Spring, than which none can be more beautiful. It has been often described, but it is not easy to convey an idea of the deep opaque tint of the water, nor of the picturesque effect of the round pool, and its overhanging shade of live-oak, palmettoes, and vines. It is about eighty feet in diameter, and very deep. There is no motion to the blue water, but a large stream flows away from it, showing the volume of the spring. The water leaves traces of white sulphur along the brook, which falls some twenty or thirty feet to the lake, affording a perfect place for running water and shower baths. A small tent over the stream was the only bathing convenience, but in time this will undoubtedly be developed into one of the most

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beautiful resorts on the river, and prove one of the most healthful and agreeable.

We remained over-night at the Mellonville wharf, visited some gardens conducted by people of taste and skill, and saw many evidences of the capacity of this soil and climate to produce almost every luxury. Potatoes were grown in February for the table, oranges and bananas flourished free from danger of frost, and beautiful flowers rewarded very little care with profuse bloom. The geranium was a small tree in the open air, and the oleander made shade for a party. Strawberries were ripe while ours were under deep snow, and it was not easy to put faith in the idea that the cold March winds were heaping drifts that would for many a day resist the sun that fell with such force upon us.

Turning northward, we gave ourselves to the current, and went rapidly on. At times we would tie to a tree, and leaving the yacht, row quietly up some of the small and unfrequented streams that join the river. Here all was as wild as when the Indians pursued game with their stone arrow-heads, and took fish with bone spears; and nature seemed to revel in her own power and beauty, and cast her glories of golden sunlight and varied foliage on every hand. The huge serried leaves of the palmettoes swayed and glistened like shields hiding a woodland host. Cypress trees held their light foliage high against the sky, and graceful vines hung in long curves from them to the dense undergrowth of novel form. Creeping plants held their bloom over the water on dead trunks, and air-plants and ferns found resting places on the old oaks, in whose upper branches balls of mistletoe shone with their polished leaves. All this would be doubled in reflection, while the dividing line between the

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beautiful reality and the no less beautiful image below, was so hidden by trailing vines and aquatic plants that the vistas of the narrow streams became dreamy and indistinct as they extended far away into an uncertainty of waving moss and deceptive shadows.

Again we would go on miles in advance of the yacht, drifting noiselessly with the stream, often stealing upon game, and frequently getting a few fish. When tired, we could wait until overtaken, tie our skiff behind the steamer, and enter the snug cabin to find shelter, rest, and all the comforts needful. No life could be more enjoyable. We were not confined to a limited district, as when in camp, and yet there was the same freedom, and the same opportunities for seeing and sharing wild-wood pursuits. There was variety in every day, fresh scenes each hour, and new temptations and anticipations leading on and on from one point to another, all with little or no fatigue.

This steam yachting must develop as one of the most popular of all indulgences. With our great lakes, connected by safe and navigable routes, and rivers of endless extent and unlimited variety, through which one may wander from the tropics to the far north, and find all climates and the fruits and game of each, there are unparalleled opportunities for this luxurious life. Whatever taste or fancy may impel one to wandering, in a yacht all the comforts and conveniences can be carried. The botanist can, at leisure and undisturbed, unfold his cases of plants; the artist can sketch and not have to gather up the disorder of easel and studio; the geologist may ballast his craft with stone, and the ichnologist gather relics and form a museum *en route*. For the naturalist and sportsman it is perfection. His rods

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need not be unjointed, or his guns uncased. He can stuff his specimens, load shells, and tie dainty flies by a window before which new and varied scenes are passing; and after a hard day's tramping come back to abundant comforts. As yet there are but few of these dainty craft afloat, and few are aware of the charming life they offer. The fleet and dainty private yacht Falcon, on the St. Johns, was a pleasant exponent of a sportsman's craft, and in time many more will follow in her wake.

Of course there is a good deal of expense inseparable from steam yatching, but very complete launches and small yachts are now put afloat in perfect trim for hardly any greater cost for purchase or maintenance than is represented by each of hundreds of fine carriages that are to be met with on the fashionable avenues of our great cities, and the writer is confident from personal experience that, abandoning all ambition for the luxuries of cuisine, and seeking only plain and needful arrangements, a small family or a few gentlemen may make summer or winter trips with no more cost than is incurred by hundreds of pleasure parties who find far less of comfort and independence than they would commanding their own yacht and their own movements. A man of as much skill as is required to make a successful sportsman, can do a great deal in attending to his own boat, so that the cost and annoyance of having too many men may be avoided; but unless our inspection laws are made more liberal, he must provide himself and his men with expensive licenses, and be sometimes compelled to take his men from a guild or union commanding needlessly high wages. All this, however, is in course

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of revisal, and beyond doubt, boats that do not carry for hire will be set free from all needless restrictions.*

The trip described in these notes was made in a small yacht chartered by the day. She was about 48 feet long, and carried captain, pilot, engineer, and fireman, yet the cost for a party of four was only about the same as the daily hotel board and passage tickets over the route; while the ability to visit many points without remaining until another boat should permit moving on, was a very great economy of time and money. Of course much was seen and enjoyed that the tourist is usually hurried past, or only seen in company with a crowd that does away with all the romance and characteristic quiet of the wilderness. The captain was a useless party, and did no service. The pilot was needful. The fireman was a luxury, a mere attendant upon a lazy engineer; one man

* The attention of owners of steam yachts is called to the importance of embodying in the new steamboat inspection laws some exemptions in favor of steam yachts and launches. As the law now stands, they are liable to severe penalties for not complying with requirements that neither their size nor character render proper, and in the Southern States a number of small exploring and pleasure boats have been abandoned because of the oppressions of a law designed for large vessels, carrying for hire. An immediate effort will undoubtedly secure such amendments as will encourage the use of steam launches, and enable explorers and sportsmen to use them with a reasonable economy, and free them from needless legal red tape and embarrassment. For instance, the requirement that a boat, however small, must carry an engineer, captain, and pilot—no one man to hold two licenses, and these licenses costing $10 each, and a good deal of trouble—is one that is unreasonable when applied to a small boat, where one man is competent to do all about the engine, and the owner can steer, taking his own risk now and then of getting on a sand bar. There is no real reason why a boat carrying no persons for hire should be under any more restrictions than a sail boat, in which people are permitted to drown themselves with the main sheet tied, and no licensed sailor on board. Sportsmen cannot carry so many men on small yachts and launches. There is neither need nor room for them, and it may be presumed that any person owning a craft of the kind will, for his own comfort and safety, exercise the same high degree of care and skill that distinguish sportsmen, yachtmen, and horsemen, in their guns, boats, and equipage.

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could easily feed the fire, and run the engine with less trouble than he could get out of the fireman's way, so that two men, one a competent and *careful* engineer, and the other a pilot well acquainted with the channels, could run a launch or small yacht with ease, and keep her under way as many hours per diem as would be desirable.

Not only are the rivers and lakes of Florida attractive cruising grounds, but the inlets and estuaries of the southern coasts offer great inducements for the invalid, the naturalist, the antiquarian, and the sportsman. In the spring, when the sun begins to fall with a fierce heat on the rivers, and despite all said to the contrary, *does* render too much exposure imprudent, the sea coast is perfect. The finer kinds of fish are in season, and many beach and bay birds are to be obtained. In April the sea-bathing is safe and pleasant, and invalids and *well people* will do a prudent thing who halt alongshore and delay their return until such birds as the bobolinks and orioles are with them, and not risk the loss of all the benefit of a long and costly trip by coming on with the robins and blue-birds, who are beguiled by a few warm days into shivering through many a long, bleak storm.

Your correspondent was, later in the spring, one of a party to cruise about the mouth of the St. Johns and the Sisters' Islands, and during the trip we landed on Fort George Island, where we were kindly driven about by the owner, who is engaged, with a number of gentlemen of taste, in forming a little paradise. The island is not large, about eleven hundred acres. The St. Johns outlet is on the south, Fort George Inlet on the north, and the Sisters' Inlet on the west. Seaward a densely wooded bluff, eighty feet high, shelters from the ocean

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gales, and beyond is a superb beach for driving, bathing, cricket, or croquet. From the bluff the view is of course very fine, and all the commerce of the St. Johns river passes near at hand. The cleared part of the island has a palmetto avenue that has no equal, and the forests are more varied than any that are accessible by drives. Shell mounds supply material for fine roads, and many drives are being laid out that are wonderfully beautiful. There is but little of the dreary formal pine; but huge bearded oaks that are worthy of druidical homage, and stately palmettoes, cast deep wide shadows, while orange trees and flowering vines and shrubs fill in the scene with luxuriant bloom and foliage. At St. Augustine the beaches are inaccessible to carriages, and distant by boats, but here they are where one can turn to them from the shaded avenues. The fishing is fine, to my knowledge, as my fisherman took a thirty-five pound bass from my skiff.

For lingering places for late March, April, and May, these islands supply just what all feel the need of. No arrangements are yet made for general accommodation, but plans are maturing that, when executed, will supply a new and valuable resort to already attractive Florida, and more tempting to yachtmen than any now existing.

Returning from this rambling disquisition upon drifting in one's own craft, we come back to our own for the time, and tie her to the wharf at Orange Bluff, above Lake George. Night has fallen, and we light a pitch-pine fire, and cook thereon while enjoying the picturesque effect of the rich, mellow light that illumines our boat against the dark river, and brings out here and there a tree in bright relief. Some hunters join us, light their pipes, and take their nightcap from our flask. The stories of

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a real backwoodsman are always amusing, and awaken the common interest of all the craft. So it is late before we mature plans with our new friends for a hunt together, and they call their dogs and go to their cabin, and we turn in in the yacht.

L. W. LEDYARD.

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XX.

AMONG THE SEMINOLES.

BY the treaty of 1842, the few Seminoles remaining in Florida after the war, were confined to the southern portion of the peninsula. There they still remain, between two and three hundred in number, leading a peaceful life, cultivating their fields, and hunting. They are governed by two chiefs; those around the southern shore of Lake Okeechobee by Tustenuggee, and those east of that great lake by Tiger Tailee. Their intercourse with white men is limited to occasional trading visits to Indian river and the Keys. Though they have existed as a nation for one hundred years, very little is known regarding their language, customs, and social life.

It was with the avowed object of studying the Indian in his native wilds that I left Indian river one beautiful spring morning in '72. I had provided myself with an ox-cart, oxen of course, and a guide—though just what he was a guide of, and to where, I've not satisfactorily determined to this day—and the usual amount of hunters' traps. There was also a colored individual, who had charge of the frying-pan and coffee pot. Well, we progressed favorably enough, till the second night out found us fifteen miles from my camp on Indian river, thirty miles from Okeechobee, and further travel apparently

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stopped by a long line of cypress swamp. So we camped on the Alpattiokee. Alpattiokee is Seminole for Alligator creek. Game was abundant; deer in herds on the savannas; turkeys in flocks in the hammocks; the half-dry creek bed swarmed with ibis and heron of every hue, and alligators were in abundance. They crawled upon the banks of the creek, reposed upon its sand bars, and swam its waters. They made night hideous with their bellowings, and kept our mastiff in perpetual dread of being devoured by assailing him while he reposed by our camp-fire. Every inducement for the stay of hunter or naturalist was offered, and every tramp and hunt would bring new additions of rare plants and birds to my collection.

While hunting along the various creeks I discovered signs of Indians—in the sand of the dry creek-bed the impressions of moccasined feet; on its banks a "cabbage palm" with its terminal bud torn out and the leaves scattered. An old Indian camp, strewn with bones of deer, turkey, and tortoise, showed that the place was a favorite hunting ground. There were fresh tracks of three Indian hunters, besides fainter ones of a woman and child. One day Jim came in with the pickaninny's playthings—an alligator tooth, two or three grotesquely-shaped pieces of brier root, and a walnut. While we were examining them we heard a faint tinkling in the distance, and a preliminary reconnoisance revealed three Indians approaching the ford in the creek near our camp. Affecting to be employed with our duties, we only looked up as they appeared, and they, taking no notice of us, marched on with heads erect till brought to a halt by Jim, who ran forward with extended hand and a hearty "Howdy." Then their swarthy faces displayed grins

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which grew broad and loud as we summoned unhappy Tom to prepare a repast for the weary aborigines. Removing from their pony a huge pack, upon which was a tin kettle, which had made the tintinnabulation we had heard, they hobbled his feet and sat down. While they were demolishing the huge pile of flapjacks which Jim set before them, I had an opportunity for studying their dress and features.

"Tiger," the oldest, was about seventy years old, and had fought in the Seminole war. He was rather above the medium height, broad shouldered, massive arms, and legs like mahogany pillars, worn smooth and polished by many a brush with thicket and brier. His nose and lips indicated a trace of negro blood. His iron-gray hair straggled over a greasy bandana bound about his temples. His broad shoulders were artistically draped in two ragged shirts of "hickory," or striped homespun, the inner one about a foot longer than the outer, and reaching nearly to his knees. A breech cloth and moccasins completed his attire. Charley Osceola was a young man of twenty, claiming to be a descendant of the famous chief Osceola. Over six feet high, with broad shoulders and finely-shaped limbs, erect and straight, he was my *beau ideal* of an Indian brave. His eyes were small, black, and keen, his voice was musical, and he spoke in a firm, gentle manner that won my heart at once. His hair was thick, coarse, and black, with the changeable purple of the raven's wing. It was shaved close at the sides, leaving a ridge on the crown, spreading toward the neck, and hanging in braids over the shoulders. His dress was similar to Tiger's. The pickaninny was hardly worth a description. Each car-

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ried a rifle, a reserve supply of bows and arrows, and a pouch for ammunition, etc.

They obstinately refused to talk "Yankaistahadka," or Yankee talk, but used their own language. It was a long time before I could be made to understand that "shatokanowa humkin" meant one dollar, the price of a set of bows and arrows, but after much labor I mastered their system of numeration up to a thousand, though I will now admit that I was much exercised at "chopkakolehokolin," and gave it up.

While Osceola was making me some talipikahs, or moccasins, Jim was endeavoring to extract from Tiger the proper route to Lake Okeechobee, and whether we could reach it with our ox-cart. Jim had mingled with the Indians in his youth, and prided himself upon his accomplishments in the manner of dealing with them, and speaking their language. Tiger sat upon his haunches beneath the spreading branches of a live-oak, looking like some ragged Turk.

Jim (in a loud voice)—"Okeechobee; you savez?"

Tiger—"Eucah" (yes).

Jim—"Okeechobee; me go; walkah (oxen) go; Yankaistahadka go; hey?"

Tiger—"Eucah; walkah, me eatum; good!"

Jim—"No, you old fool (emphasized); you know more'n you pertend; walkah no slumpy, slumpy, no sticky, icky in the mud; that's what I mean."

Tiger—"Haigh!"

Jim—"Oh, you old blackleg; you consarned old manatee! Can't you talk Istachatta (Indian), or do yer mean to go back on yer native tongue? Come, now, talk Yankee talk; none of your dog-goned nonsense and hog Latin. Okeechobee, me go; walkah go; cartah go;

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Istalusta (mulatto) go; no get stuckah, no have to come backah; hey?"

[This in fearful tones, for Jim held, with many others, that you could make any foreigner understand, provided you spoke loud enough].

Tiger—"Istalusta; shookah, me give um; pahlen!" and he looked wistfully at Tom.

Jim—"Ten hogs for that nigger! There, I'll give up; the—something—heathenish old chattymico don't know Injun no more'n a cracker!"

A peculiar twinkle of Tiger's eyes convinced me that he "knew more'n he pertended," but what his reasons were for baffling Jim's curiosity I didn't know till later.

That night we left our camp on the Alpattiokee, and made our fire at the foot of the "forked cabbage," on a branch of the Alpattie. The Indians accompanied us, though unasked. It seems that Tiger had divined Jim's meaning, and had determined to prevent us from reaching our destination. He had concocted a fearful scheme to prevent our departure—it was to *eat us out*. I didn't know it at the time, or I shouldn't have aided them as I did.

The shades of night and the time for our evening repast drew near. In honor of our guests, Tom had cooked just four times the usual quantity of flapjacks, besides our last steak of venison. I had devoured but one flapjack, and was about securing another, when, lo! they were not. Tiger sat dignified and sad; Charley dignified and serious; "Fistilokeen" dignified and dirty. The corners of their mouths ran hog juice, their faces and hands were unctuous with it, yet there they sat, patiently waiting, sad and serious; grieved even, judging from their countenances.

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Tom refused to cook any more.

"Is-ta-lus-ta lazy; ho-la-wan-gus!" said Tiger.

Thus taunted, Tom broke open our last package of flour, and busied himself, cursing the Indians the while, till they all united in a satisfied "me full!" These untutored "sons of the forest" soon left us, with their customary "me hiepus j" (me go), and we were not very sorry that, to use their own expression, they were "sui-cus-j" (gone). From Tom's quarters, that night, I heard a muttered blessing upon the "Is-ta-chat-tas." In the morning they brought us a peace-offering of venison, and that night we had an alligator hunt by moonlight.

I shall never forget the weird aspect of the scene spread out before us, as we assembled silently upon the banks of the creek. The creek bed could be traced through the vast plain by the occasional clumps of palms, till lost in the swamp far beyond. The bright plumaged herons, that told of its meanderings as they hovered over it by day, were now gone, and silence, as of the grave, reigned over us. The creek-bed was dry and exposed, except at intervals there were great holes full of alligators—rightly called "alligator holes." Here, crowded together, they were patiently awaiting the setting in of the rainy season, which would set them free from their narrow prisons.

The "'gators" seemed to have had notice of our coming, as, when we gathered upon the steep bank, not a head was visible. "Ump, ump, ump!" said Fistilokeen, imitating the grunting of a young alligator. Soon a dozen knotty heads showed themselves, peering anxiously above the water. At the slightest motion they would disappear.

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"Ump, ump, ump, ump, ump!"

The evil-looking eyes again appeared, and the round noses gave utterance to similar though louder sounds. Up they came, silently, cautiously, till I counted twenty-seven above the water of the little pond. Giving me the line, Jim launched the harpoon at the side of the largest. True—as his aim always was—the sharp head pierced the reptile's side in its most vulnerable part, just behind the fore-leg. A rush, a roar, as though all the bulls of the prairie had united in one grand outburst, and this king of Alpattiokee sped from one end to the other of his small kingdom, making the water boil, and leaving a bloody wake behind him. I have seen the dolphin and porpoise cross and recross the bow of a steamer at full speed, I have seen the shark and bluefish in their most desperate rushes, but it did seem to me, standing by that solitary creek in the soft moonlight, as I slackened and tightened the line as the alligator alternately sulked and darted, that the remarkable speed of those fishes was paralleled in the lightning-like rapidity with which that huge serrated tail clove the water and forced its owner onward. After a little while he got to be somewhat exhausted, and I passed the line to the rest of the party and seized the axe, to be ready for him as he was drawn ashore. It was hard work even then to land him on the soft sand, and he would throw that huge tail around till it nearly touched his nose, and snap his jaws till the night air resounded again. But, watching my chance, I sunk the axe deep in his skull, and his struggles ceased as the quivering paws clawed the sand convulsively and then relaxed. We finished eight more before midnight. A ghastly spectacle they formed,

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lying upon their backs, their white bellies and mailed sides glistening in the moonlight.

"Umph! alpatah fight heap!" was the only exclamation our red brothers made.

A few days later we parted from our friends, and, after sending Jim into the river, I hired another guide and set out for the Indian settlement. The man I now hired was an old "cow herder," having charge of several hundred cattle which roamed in a half-wild state through the woods and over the vast prairies. His house was the only one between Indian river and Lake Okeechobee, a distance of nearly fifty miles. We left the cabin, mounted upon two stallions trained for cattle hunting and following narrow trails. Each horse carried a pair of saddle-bags, bag of corn, pair of blankets, and a man. Each man had a gun, pint cup, and big knife. Leaving the cabin early one day, we reached the Indian settlement late the next. Our only guide was a narrow trail across the vast plats, following dry creek-beds, through cypress swamps and saw-grass jungles, beneath gigantic pines and through thick palmetto scrub. We followed this trail, made by the Indians, in a southwesterly direction till we struck the saw-grass bordering the "Big Cypress," a belt of cypress swamp nearly forty miles in length. Through this swamp there was but one narrow, blind trail, carefully concealed, lest the white man should find it. But my guide was an old "tracker" during the Seminole war, and struck it just where it entered the swamp. Dismounting, we attempted to lead our horses through. Bleeding and torn we emerged from the saw-grass to enter the blackest looking swamp it was ever my lot to behold. The tall cypress grew high above our heads, shutting out every ray of light; long

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vines and hooked briers hung from the limbs above and festooned every tree. The mud beneath was of the blackest and softest; stagnant pools of water, covered with green slime, gave hiding places to numberless alligators and moccasin snakes, numbers of which unwound themselves from the gnarled cypress trees and wriggled silently away after darting at us their forked tongues. While carefully avoiding these noxious places a long vine would come athwart my horse's back, sweeping blankets, saddle-bags and all into the mud. To describe the rage of my guide at such a juncture would be impossible. I was mad, but he was even more so, and swore and stormed in a way that was perfectly frightful, causing the innocent snakes and alligators to flee in terror still farther into the black fastnesses of the swamp. My rage died away as his increased, for I was convinced that black as was the picture, he was doing it justice. At every leap our poor beasts sank above their knees, and it required much dodging to lead them through the narrow apertures and escape being struck by their fore feet. Never was daylight hailed more joyfully than when we emerged from the tangled thicket and at last reached solid ground. The Big Cypress was passed, and we were in the Indian country.

A few miles over a level prairie and we saw the first habitation. A little further, and we caught sight of a squaw running rapidly to apprise the men at work in the swamps of our arrival. They couldn't have chosen a locality more favorable to their mode of living than this. A swamp bounded it on the north and east, and a forest of pines on the south and west. The scene presented was one of peaceful rest and happiness. What wonder that the Seminole fought for his chosen land as he did!

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The meadow lark trilled his clear notes from the grass, where, also, we heard the mellow whistle of the quail. Woodpeckers and paroquets flew screaming by, and the wood ibis winged his silent way overhead.

Soon the entire population came forth to meet us, with the exception of the women, and we were welcomed to the village. There were sixteen shanties grouped together, with that of the chiefs a little way off. Four posts supported a pitched roof, thatched with palmetto leaves. The shanty was open at the sides and ends; a raised platform of logs the whole length and breadth was used to sleep upon by night, and as a table and chairs, etc., by day. We were much annoyed by the dogs, who would come about us examining everything we had. They were nasty little curs, most of them, who would creep carefully up to us, with noses extended and tails between their legs, and who would scurry away at the least motion. I am prepared to vouch for the statement of the old sailor, Romans, who, in 1770, says: "They (the Creeks) are very fond of dogs, insomuch as never to kill one out of a litter; and it is not uncommon in the nation to see a dog, very lean, and so sensible of his misfortune as to seek a wall or post for his support before venturing to bark." (Another "old joke)." I mention things in their natural order of affection in the Indian estimation—dog, hog, squaw, and pickaninny. The hogs were black, as all Florida hogs are, and numerous. The children were brown, and numerous. The girls and young squaws were much superior to their degraded sisters of the west in point of beauty and cleanliness. Of medium height, with small hands and feet and well-shaped limbs. Their heads were small and well-shaped; eyes black and lustrous; nose small and

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straight; mouth small and full-lipped. Their hair was long, black, and abundant. The older women were less prepossessing, as older women usually are. All, however, had the same low, musical voice, excepting the old hags and habitual tobacco chewers. The women wore a short cape over the shoulders, and a petticoat. These two articles, with a profusion of beads, completed their attire, with, of course, moccasins. The only exception to this style was a young widow, who, being in mourning, was allowed to wear but a single apron, and was forbidden by their law to leave camp for two years. The squaws are very careful of their master's health. Pickaninnies under twelve, or thereabouts, were in a "state of nature;" boys over twelve, and under sixteen, wore a shirt, and girls a petticoat; women as described. Upon great occasions both sexes ornament themselves with beads, ribbons, and silver.

At first the maidens were coy and bashful, but they soon overcame their natural diffidence, and sweetly insinuated that "ichee" (tobacco), or "on-mee" (whiskey), would not be unacceptable.

After a short stay at the village, we all went over to Indian Parker's cornfield, a mile away in the swamp. Parker, his wife and children, were all at work when we arrived, but soon washed themselves, and set before us great milky ears of corn, roasted in the ashes. He had corn over six feet high, pumpkins, beans, etc., all growing finely—this in April. Next, we visited Tiger at his plantation. I met with a warm reception, and was introduced to his squaw. In the course of our conversation he said: "You hum-bux-j?" I told him I thought not; I never had to my present knowledge. He then repeated more earnestly, "You humbuxj!"

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This time I got vexed, and told him I wasn't. A third "humbuxj," accompanied by a gesture, directed my attention to a small palmetto shanty, beneath which were three iron pots, around which were three hungry Indians, and from which (the pots, not the shanty) they were "humbuxjing" after the most approved style. As I was extremely hungry I *humbuxjed.* Here was an opportunity! Tiger had eaten me out at Alligator creek; I would now pay him back in kind. I looked for my guide; he had disappeared. I unbuckled my belt, laid aside my revolver, and joined the band of revellers. "How romantic," thought I; "to be sure, things aren't just as I'd like to have them, but then, when you're in Rome, etc." The pot nearest me contained a dirty looking liquid, which, as near I could remember, not having seen any for six months, looked exactly like dish-water, boiled over twice, with the dish-rag left in. It was corn and water boiled. A huge wooden spoon was employed to convey this delectable nourishment to its proper receptacle—the mouth. The bowl of the aforesaid spoon was as big as a baby's head, and while I was wondering how 'twas used, a shock-headed urchin inserted it, drew it forth full, elevated it till the handle pointed toward the zenith, when presto! the dish-water disappeared, the spoon was returned to the pot with a swoop of satisfaction, and Injun number two proceeded to do likewise. Number three did even so, and I was expected to ditto. I was hungry; I knew it; I'd eaten nothing but the roast corn since sunrise, and had ridden near thirty miles that day. But, strangely, my appetite was gone. I forgave Tiger for eating all my flapjacks; I promised myself to forget it. After all, he hadn't done so very badly. But the eyes of all were upon me.

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I must eat, or lose my influence. Gently I grasped the spoon, coyly I fished for a few kernels of corn, and very little of the dish-water. I shut my eyes, opened my mouth, shuddered, gulped—lo, 'twas done! The second pot contained pieces of boiled meat about an inch square, which proved very good eating. So, inserting my fingers, *à la* Indian, I drew forth a piece and ate it. The third vessel contained about thirty feet of sausage, looking so natural and life-like that I instinctively recoiled. One of my brother revellers would seize one end of the membranous rope, and, after storing away as much as his mouth would contain, would sever by a dexterous cut the adipose tissue and pass it to the next. When my turn came I begged to be excused, and I've never hankered for sausage since.

I stuck to pot No. 2; my appetite returned. I yet cherished revengeful feelings toward Tiger, and did my best. The meat was tender and juicy; moreover, it had a delicious flavor that I never had found pork possessed of. Of course it was pork; it wasn't venison, nor bear, nor coon; and I vowed I would get the receipt, and that the next stray pig should be offered up. To be sure that it was a pig I said to "Charley," imitating the Indian manner, "Um; good; too much; 'Shokocalika?'" A negative shake of the head, and a single word, "Efab" (dog), terminated the repast. In my sleep that night came visions of fearful Indian curs, chopped into small pieces, yet having the power to bark and bite.

As a special honor, I was assigned the chief's shanty to sleep in that night, he being away. It differed in no way from the rest, and probably the round logs which made my bed were just as hard as the others.

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The next day we visited the corn fields, and, a rain coming up, accompanied Parker and Tiger to their shanties. My guide having offered his horse to Parker's squaw, I could do no less than offer mine to the old squaw, which Tiger accepted in behalf of himself. I hoped he would break his neck. It was an unique procession that wound through the shady cypress swamps and over the prairie. First there were Parker's two daughters—young ladies of sixteen and seventeen respectively—who had captured one of papa's colts, and, mounted upon its back man-fashion, led the cavalcade. They seemed to be enjoying themselves, and their musical laughter would come floating back at every leap and kick of their half-broken steed. Next came Parker's wife, astride my guide's pony, with a solemn-looking pappoose on her back, holding up her scanty skirts with one hand, while with the other she guided the beast. Next came Tiger, with my rubber blanket over his head, a tin kettle on one arm, an iron pot on the other, and a lap full of corn. He didn't see the comical figure he cut, but treated the whole matter as a thing of serious moment. Parker, a host of pickaninnies, eleven dogs, a young colt, and a hog or two came next. My guide and I came last. The procession started; the girls had stripped, and were clinging to the pony and each other for dear life. We had gone but a few rods before the pony suddenly elevated his heels, landing the girls—a confused vision of arms and legs—rods away in the mud. With another flourish of his heels, and a snort of defiance, he then scoured away over the plain. That started the rest; my guide's pony vainly strove to throw his burden. Tiger had his hands particularly full as the bay stallion sped away, with the blanket flapping and pail

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rattling. I shall never forget the desperate expression of Tiger's face as he went off, clinging to the horse and shouting broken fragments of Seminole, such as "Che-la-koa (horse) ho-la-wan-gus (bad); cha-high-wagh (squaw), ho-la-wan-gus—dam!" The colt now went for the scene, upsetting a whole line of dogs, and extorting profane exclamations from the patient Parker. After we had reached the shanties they came in, one after another, and, removing their wet garments (such as had any), we squatted around the cheerful blaze of pine knots, placed Indian fashion, with the ends toward the centre of the flame.

According to promise, Charley was to pilot me to Lake Okeechobee, but as several days elapsed, and no offer was made, I became impatient, and anxiously sought for information regarding it. The only satisfactory replies I received were as to its size:

"Okeechobee, achiska pahleorstein, heap long; achiska pahlehokolin."

This intelligence was very gratifying, as it settled many misgivings I had indulged in.

FRED BEVERLY.

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XXI.

IN THE CYPRESS SWAMPS.

LAKE OKEECHOBEE is almost as little known now as it was one hundred years ago, when it rejoiced in the name of Mayaco. Then everything mysterious and inexplicable was referred to Lake Mayaco. The source of the river St. Johns, even now unsettled, was said to be there. Another river, the St. Lucie, had its rise there, and strange tales were told of the wonderful lake by a Spanish captive, who reached it by this river. The wonderful sacred vulture of Bartram, so vividly described by that naturalist, was said to be a resident of Okeechobee, and hasn't been seen since its first description, a century ago. With a few exceptions, during the Seminole war, Lake Okeechobee has not been visited by white men. There is no portion of our great western domain of the same area so completely unknown to us. There the Seminole is said to have his best plantations and choicest hunting grounds. In the secure fastnesses of the Everglades he may bid defiance to our largest armies, and laugh at every effort to secure him.

When I found myself within six miles of the great lake, I thought that I should soon penetrate the dark belt of cypress that surrounded it, and disclose some of the wonders locked within its mysterious shores. I had the promise from my Seminole guide that he would fetch

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me to its shores ere another sun had set. Making every preparation, the morning agreed upon I sought my guide. To my surprise, he refused to go, alleging, as his only reason, that Tiger wouldn't let him. All my persuasions were useless. Offers of revolver, bowie knife, and money were alike unavailing. Tiger was chief in the head chief's absence, and could not be disobeyed. The reason of Tiger's veto, as I afterward ascertained, was that I had not counselled him first, and he felt affronted. At last a happy thought struck me. Would he go within a mile of the lake? Yes, he would do that; and we were soon on the trail leading westward. We passed through a small settlement of shanties, the inhabitants of which had gone on a hunt, leaving all their household goods stored away beneath the palmetto thatch. Over broad prairies we travelled without seeing an indication of life, and through pine barrens without a single animal visible; all had been killed, probably, by the Indians. Soon we left the dense swamp that circled the edge of the piney woods, and struck a wide stretch of prairie extending north and south as far as the eye could reach. West we could see the tall cypress said to border the lake. Just as we reached a little clump of palmettoes, about midway the prairie, a thunder-storm—such as only Florida is capable of—burst upon us. For an hour the flood came down, and drenched us and our goods, although we were covered with the broad leaves of the palmetto.

Soon it was over, and the sun came out, and there was a solemn hush, broken only by a low, sullen roar, like the roll of the sea, coming from the west. I knew without other explanation what that was. It was the breaking of the surf upon the shore of Lake Okeechobee. So

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near, yet likely to remain as unseen as though I was a hundred miles away, for my Indian guide refused to go further, and to seek a trail was an almost hopeless task. No present would tempt him; no mount of persuasion move him. So we left him to return to his camp, and pursued our way toward the north. All that afternoon we hunted for a trail that would take us to the lake; but none was found, and so we made our fire beneath a lone clump of pines at night, having accomplished nothing. Over thirty years before had the troopers, hunting the Seminoles, camped in this very place. There existed here but one trace of civilization, and that was the old wagon trail over which the supplies for Fort Van Swearengen and the lower forts were drawn. Though unused since the Indian war, except by some settler fleeing from the dread of conscription during the rebellion, it still showed to the experienced eye where the wheels had worn. How strange that impression should remain so long! Though at first unable to discover the slightest trace of it, I could soon follow its course almost instinctively, as sometimes the evidences of its existence were so indefinite that I could hardly tell what it was that showed it. It might be a worn palmetto root, a different kind of grass, or a slight depression in the retentive soil; sometimes, seeing it rods away, a close examination near would fail to reveal its presence. Next morning we followed the trail till it lost itself in a swamp, and then we struck the piney woods, intending to swing around till we could fetch Fort Bassenger, on the Kissimee river. On and on we went, till our passage seemed stopped by a black, deep creek, overhung with dark cypress, and swarming with alligators. This creek was no doubt flowing directly into Okeechobee, but, as much as I wanted to

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go with it, I was powerless for the want of a boat. There was nothing for us but to cross it, though we were obliged to swim with the criticising gaze of dozens of alligators fixed upon us, and dodge fallen trees and tangled vines as best we could. Beyond was another swamp, and still beyond this a broad stretch of blessed prairie. Over this we cantered for miles, then through deep woods, now through swamps, belly deep in mud, and still no signs of the signal smokes that were to indicate the hunter's camp at Fort Bassenger. Before night it dawned upon us that we were lost. Now, so long as a man will fight off the conviction that he is lost, there is hope that he may eventually find his way out. But my guide, no sooner than this idea had dawned upon him, gave himself over to the most unreasonable of actions and doings. Heretofore I trusted in him implicitly, but I now saw that his reason was gone for the time, and my heart sank. Yielding to my persuasions, he camped in a palmetto clump, and we ate our last biscuit and piece of pork. We had saved this same pork to the last, hoping that we could induce some unwary Indian to accept it, in lieu of more palatable food. But no Seminole was so accommodating, and we chewed it in silence. The rind was an inch thick, and had the appearance of amber. I sliced my piece thin and bolted it, and when my guide said it was six years old I didn't raise a doubt.

In the morning we awoke refreshed, and heading our horses northward we set out. Notwithstanding his age and experience, my guide allowed his fears to control him, and would not stop to secure one of the many deer that grazed about us, for fear that we should not reach our destination, and should have to pass another night in the woods.

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Toward noon we emerged upon the Kissimmee prairie, and then could tell with tolerable certainty the course to take. Abandoning all hope of reaching the river, we struck for the old military road, hoping to reach it before night. Faint and weary as we were, he would not rest, but pressed insanely on, with but one idea—to reach a settler's cabin before night set in. As for me I did not care. I was at the mercy of my guide, and could do nothing with him in his present state.

To turn my back upon Lake Okeechobee, and give over all hope of seeing it, required a hard struggle. But I had to yield to necessity, and so every hour saw us further and further away. Toward noon we stopped at a brackish pool to quench our thirst, and here I ate my dinner, though I didn't mean to, as it consisted of two small fish, which went down alive in the muddy water and met an untimely death. On and on we rushed. The deer sprang up from their noonday rest and skipped away, with their white banners waving tantalizingly near. Sand-hill cranes flew screaming from under our very noses. Thousands of cattle now appeared dotting the prairie. In the midst of plenty we had passed nearly twenty-four hours without food. In the afternoon I grew weary of the continual striking of my saddle-bags against my legs, and lightened ship by throwing over the heaviest of my treasures. A bottle of arsenic went first, then five pounds of shot, a lot of cartridges, and everything not actually necessary

The finder will be suitably rewarded.

Just before we reached the trail we were seeking, a beautiful fox sprang up, and, stopping a minute too long to look at the first men he probably ever met, I gave him a flying shot from the saddle that tumbled him over.

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Then I was sorry that I had killed the animal for mere sport, and vowed I'd not do it again. Yet so strong is the instinct that, riding within forty yards of a deer—offering too beautiful a shot to resist—I handed my gun to my guide and let him shoot. But he didn't hit him, and I wished I'd fired instead. As the sun dipped below the horizon we rode out upon the old military road that crosses the peninsula from the Atlantic to the Gulf. We struck it near the site of old Fort Dunn, the parade ground of which is still in tolerable condition, and cantering a mile or two further soon sighted the settler's house, and were happy.

Though this man owned hundreds of cattle, and counted as his all the acres he desired, he had nothing in the larder but a few sweet potatoes; but he freely shared those few. After a man has fasted twenty-four hours, buttermilk and sweet potatoes will fill a void acceptably. That night we slept beneath a roof, and I shared a bed with four vigorous boys and about three millions of very active fleas. Yet, though the fleas possessed uncommon agility, and showed decidedly phlebotomous dispositions, and though there was music in the air, and everywhere else, from the joint and several efforts of the various noses in the room, and though the boys aforesaid procured a corner in blankets, and left me open to the attacks of several very bloodthirsty bands of mosquitoes, *I slept.* And it was sweet potatoes and buttermilk that awoke me in the morning. Thirty miles we accomplished before dark that day, riding across the St. Johns prairies, which fairly swarmed with turkeys, and over the Alapattie flats, where we found the creeks, so dry when we left, full to overflowing. What was my surprise, when I reached my guide's cabin,

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to find Indian Parker there with a lot of deer skins, which I had bought, paid for, and left—since then giving up all hope of seeing them. Such is Seminole honesty!

What white man would have ridden sixty miles to restore another's goods? I knew of one who wouldn't.

FRED BEVERLY.

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XXII.

CRUISING ALONG SHORE.

IN Florida, eighty miles due south of St. Augustine, lies an immense lagoon of salt water, called by the old Spaniards Rio d'Ais, by the Indians Aisa Natcha, and by Floridians Indian river. Called by whatever name it may be, it is the most wonderful portion of that wonderful State. Wonderful for its bland and genial climate; wonderful for its birds, beasts, and fishes; wonderful, above all, for its people, who live in such a state of indolence as causes a Northerner to shudder. Situated mainly below the frost line, many tropical fruits reach perfection beneath its burning sun. The lime, lemon, guava, banana, pineapple, citron, and, of course, the orange, in perfection. The climate here is peculiarly adapted to the needs of the consumptive, and he can live here for years in apparent health after other climates have been tried in vain.

People who have tried California, Minnesota, and the various resorts in the Old World, have pronounced Indian river in advance of them all. The difficulties attending a trip here, and the insufficient accommodations, have prevented its advantages—its natural advantages—from becoming generally known. The steamer up the St. Johns, from Jacksonville to Salt Lake, a distance of two hundred and seventy-five miles, and a

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portage of six miles will bring the traveller to the banks of Indian river, at Harvey's, or Sand Point, where boat and guides may be hired down the river to Jupiter, one hundred and thirty miles further. The cost of transportation from New York to Sand Point will be about sixty dollars. The visitor had better camp, and bring with him such articles of need as a camper-out appreciates. An outfit may be purchased at Jacksonville at a trifling advance on New York prices. It was thus that I prepared to enjoy the pleasures of Indian river. The middle of March found me waiting at Harvey's for a favorable wind down the river.

Though the sand that lined the many bays was white as snow, and the palms, with their columnar trunks and dark green fronds, made graceful pictures, I was tired of gazing upon the same ones day after day, and finally persuaded my boatman to visit the upper portion of the river before descending. A north-west wind had driven the water upon the opposite shore two days before, and left his little boat high and dry, with fifty feet of sand flats intervening between her and navigation. But the wind again hauled southward, deluging the western shore with returning waters and enabling us to get under way. As this wind was contrary for a down-river trip, we headed for a different quarter, purposing to visit the largest orange grove in Florida, so said to be, and the best. Ten miles sailing in a north-easterly direction brought us to the landing. Did you, reader, ever inhale the fragrance of a cluster of orange blossoms? You remember the exquisite penetrating perfume. Well, add to the cluster tens of thousands more —the efflorescence of two thousand trees. The subtle odor enveloped our boat in a cloud of incense, evoked

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by the sun and wafted to our senses by a gentle breeze. A mile away we were made aware of the existence of the grove, yet hidden from us by a circling belt of palms. Two thousand trees, in long straight rows, their glossy green tops flecked with immaculate blossoms, a carpet of emerald spangled with snowy stars. In the centre of the grove we found the residence of the proprietor, Captain Dummit—a log-cabin with palmetto-thatched roof. Think of a log-cabin in the Garden of Eden! But this is but one of the worthy captain's peculiarities. There is a mystery surrounding him which he never vouchsafes to break. Even in his cups—I should say buckets—never a word is uttered regarding his seclusion from the world. Known far and near as a hard drinker, he is ever the same well-bred gentleman, be he drunk or sober.

He and Tom R. once started down the river to perform some work at the lower grove. Before setting out he gave Tom $20 to purchase provisions with. Aforesaid provisions are purchased according to his, and, may be, the captain's fancy: Whiskey, $17.50; hard tack, "jest to chaw on, you know," $1.50; pork, $1. Two bottles of whiskey Tom adds on his own account. The captain also laid in a choice stock. Thus armed they set sail, burning with an unquenchable ardor for work.

"There's old Bob; 'twould be kinder mean to pass him without a smile," says Tom.

"That's so; let's land."

They land; they "smile"; the smiles broaden into a grin, and the proposition to call the entire male population of that section, and have "a reg'lar time," is hailed with universal acclamation. Times, that is "reg'lar

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times," are much in vogue on Indian river, to the great absorption and waste of Time, the old father. It was rather up-hill work drinking the old captain drunk, but the Southern people are always earnest in a worthy cause, and he was finally deposited on a heap of oyster shells, "dead gone." In the morning he said to Tom, "I presume I was a little intoxicated last evening?"

"You were just that, and the dog-gondest, too, that I ever see!"

"Well, it's no use working with whiskey around; pass us the bottle."

"It's all gone!"

"Gone! then we'd better be sailing for Sand Point, for I'm d—d if I'll work without whiskey."

This was related to me while I camped near the grove at night, and I give it as I think of it, trusting the reader will pardon the digression.

Twenty-five years ago Captains C. and D. found the grove while hunting. A judicious grafting of the wild trees procured, in a few years, bountiful returns. The crops have sometimes been enormous—seven hundred thousand in a single year. Over half a million of the largest, juiciest oranges in America! Camping there that night, it was noon the next day before a fair down-river wind came along. When it did come a storm came with it, and we departed, accompanied by the flash of lightning and the heavy rolling of thunder. After rounding Black Point, our little craft drove straight on, heading with the river south-south-east, passing Sand Point, Joyner's, Jones' Point, and all the other points on the western shore, six miles of water intervening. We draw near the western shore, and sail along its high pine-covered banks, driving before the furious wind with only

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the jib set. Night comes and finds us still sailing. The moon struggles feebly with the clouds that threaten to conceal her, and reveals the captain still at the helm. The waves beat against his back, as he sits in grim silence, enduring their buffetings with far more patience than my infrequent questions. It is late at night ere he comes to anchor in Elbow creek, and finds a slight shelter from the tempest. Thankful that, though wet, I could not get wetter, as the rain had ceased, I crawled under the sail, wrapped myself in my blanket, and fell asleep. The captain never slept aboard, so he waded ashore and "turned in" on the beach. The usual sleep of the camper-out was granted me, long and unbroken, and I was only awakened in the morning by the fall of an oar.

Elbow creek, with its fantastically worn coquina banks, is selected as the Indian river terminus of a canal to unite the St. Johns and this lagoon, Lake Washington being the end of navigation on the St. Johns, six miles away. Though I don't take stock in the company, I doubt not its utility, if navigation on the St. Johns will warrant its being kept open all the year. A sail of five miles across the river brought us to a jutting headland of coquina, supporting a scanty soil, covered with a rich growth of beautiful palms, tall century plants, and Sisal hemp. Two crescent-shaped bays, one facing north, the other south, curved inland, their shores a firm, snowy sand. Landing, I soon discovered a small grove of orange trees, being guided to them by their fragrant blossoms. Here I discovered the only evidence of civilization I had seen this side of the river, an object that once must have caused joy in the household, and sadness for its loss. A *piano*, covered with a few boards, its

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legs shattered, and its keys rattling in the wind, stood where once had been a home. It was the old story of war's desolation and ruined fortune that accounted for this lone memento of better days in a forest five miles from the nearest house.

At this place is the southern end of Merritt's Island, which parts Indian river, the portion east, between the island and the coast, being known as Banana river, and that west retaining its old name. Cape Canaveral is not far distant, where lives the best man on the river, Captain Burnham, keeper of the lighthouse there. From the lighthouse down I counted six wrecks, thrown upon the shore in a September gale. Making a fire from driftwood, we soon had flapjacks and potatoes enough for our inner man. It was here that I received a lesson in cleanliness I shall not soon forget. I had omitted to provide myself with a dish-cloth, and while the captain was cursing my heedlessness, I went off for some Spanish moss in lieu thereof. What was my surprise, upon returning, to find the plates dry, and apparently clean.

"Where did you find a cloth?"

"Oh, I took my handkerchief!"

Now, the 'kerchief was the captain's only article in that line; a very dirty and greasy bandana, which, besides doing duty in a nasal way, was frequently applied to his watery optics, making its cleanliness a matter of doubt. When I remonstrated with him he declared I was "the dirtiest cuss he ever see," and inquired sarcastically if I thought he was a fool. The cause of his wrath, I afterward ascertained, was not my objections, but that I had overlooked the fact of his washing it, which he had done in the drinking water bucket. The native goodness of his character was made manifest that

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night, when, after keeping silent all day, he extended his hand with the remark "he guessed 'twas all right."

About fifty-five miles from Harvey's is Turkey creek, where is the only banana plantation of any extent on the river. The huge plants, with their broad green leaves and curiously formed fruit and flowers, were beautiful and picturesque. They contrasted favorably with the stunted, frost-bitten plants I had seen on the St. Johns in December. This lagoon is ahead of all northern Florida in everything—fruit, climate and game. Oranges grow here in three years from the seed; ahead of St. Johns by at least two years. There is almost no frost, and no disease peculiar to the region, while game of all descriptions line its shores. We spent two days and nights wind-bound at St. Sebastian creek, during which time we visited the coast near the place where, in 1710, a fleet of Spanish galleons were driven ashore and lost. We found no pistareens, which Romans tells us were washed up as late as 1770, but found plenty of deer and bear tracks, and pelican and ducks upon the river side without number. The sea grape and cocoa plum grow here in profusion. The former is a stout shrub, rapidly increasing in size as it nears the tropics, with a broad, heart-shaped, satin leaf. The fruit of the cocoa plum is about as large as the common plum, with a white flesh and red skin. It has a pleasant taste. The high sand-ridge, separating river from ocean, is less than three hundred yards across here, and thickly covered with scrub palmetto and gay colored flowers. Standing on its highest portion I can trace the sparkling length of Indian river and look upon the waters of the Atlantic at the same moment. For seventy-five miles one can hear the ocean surf as he sails upon the river. The high

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bluffs near St. Sebastian have been selected as the site for a hotel, but are not well suited for such a purpose. Near here is Barker's Bluff, named after a man who lost his life there—killed by the Indians, at the same time my friend, Major Russell, lost an arm. A few miles away is an island draped in white, its trees seemingly covered with snow, a circling flight of birds hovering over it, the water around dotted with hundreds of dusky objects, and the same dusky forms coming and going with no cessation in their flight.

"That's Pelican Island," said the captain. As we approached, the dark objects grew more distinct, and assumed definite shapes. The island of about two acres was covered with mangroves, long since dead; every tree loaded down with nests—great, bulky affairs, two feet across and flat. Every tree and nest was completely covered with the limy excrement of the birds, giving the island its snowy appearance at a distance. Each nest contained two nearly fledged young ones, all uniting in giving utterance to the most diabolical and soul-rending sounds, which, added to the cawing of fish, crows in search of eggs, and the screaming of eagles overhead, gave one as good an idea of pandemonium as mortal man can conceive. Though standing close together, the captain and I had to shout our loudest to be heard. The ground was covered with young birds huddled together in fright. The eagles and vultures had committed great havoc, and from branches suspended and stretched upon the ground, were the decomposing carcasses of old and young, which, added to the decaying fish, filled the air with odors—not of Araby. The old pelicans were flying overhead in clouds, occasionally alighting on some remote

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tree to feed the young with fish, which they brought to them in their pouches.

Two months later, in May, I found the young had flown, and every nest with a complement of large white eggs. There are two species of pelican on our Atlantic coast—the white and brown. This was the brown; its plumage of mottled white and gray on the back, dark sides and breast, with a rich velvety brown neck and white head, was not altogether homely. Their long bills, a foot in length, and immense pouches, capable of holding a gallon, give them a very odd appearance.

The approaches to the "Narrows" are guarded by two walls of living green, which, when seen at a distance, seem to be but a few paces apart, leaving but a narrow gateway. As we draw near, however, the distance increases, disclosing a passage nearly a mile in width. Seventy miles it is to the northern end of the lagoon, and above there is a varying width of from three to eight miles. Below the Narrows is a land of plenty.

Here the oysters accumulate in such quantities that they form this narrow passage. A storm is observed gathering, and just as we enter the Mangrove Islands it bursts upon us. Before the north wind we scud with bare poles, and are obliged to exert all our caution to prevent being wrecked upon some of the many oyster reefs that obstruct the channel.

It is ten miles through; and through the gathering gloom we just discern a sheltering point, after long exposure to the gale. With the storm thundering after us, we silently endure the rain, hoping that night will bring relief; but no lull occurs, and we anchor behind a projecting reef and finally wade ashore. Hanging our blankets on the mangroves to windward, we finally start

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a fire with the aid of light wood-splinters, and after warming some flapjacks and thoroughly steaming ourselves, roll ourselves in our blankets and sleep, with sundry awakenings to replenish the fire.

Toward morning the rain ceased, but not till it had wet us through—yes, through, for the captain said he could feel the rain water "slosh about" in his stomach. I know that, although I had carefully covered myself with my rubber blanket, when I awoke it was to find myself in a puddle four inches deep. Under the circumstances, wasn't it natural that I should desire just a drop of whiskey? I had a quart of the best, which I had intrusted to the captain's locker, and thought that now, if ever, was the time to use it.

"Captain, in my youth, when very young, and consequently incompetent for such a performance, I signed the pledge. Remember, it was while quite young, and at a very tender age; in fact, I think it hardly valid now, and binding. Then again, I signed off from anything that would intoxicate, and I'm ready to swear that nothing ever distilled from grain can intoxicate me now, there's so much water in me. I think I'll try a drop of that whiskey."

"The bottle is in the starn."

Quickly I drew it forth; slowly and sadly I returned it—'twas empty. The captain evaded my gaze, muttering the while: "'Twas so confounded bad I didn't like to have it round, and so I drunk it up first night."

A run of a dozen miles in the genial warmth of the sun restores our spirits—not the *spiritus frumenti*, however—and we land at Fort Capron, an old military post, with a very sharp appetite for breakfast. A hedge of oleanders ten feet in height surrounds the plantation,

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now gone to decay. The Cherokee rose, and the Spanish bayonet with its magnificent pyramid of honey-scented bells, add their fragrance to that of the oleander. A walk through the deserted orange grove reveals many tropical wonders, such as the India rubber, satin-wood, guava, lime, lemon, and citron. Vestiges of pineapple plants are shown, which can be raised here successfully. At Fort Pierce, four miles south, is an excellent location for a hotel or boarding house. The situation is high and airy, securing immunity from those pests of the low land, the sand-flies. It is opposite to the main entrance to the Atlantic, where vessels of not over four feet draught can enter. Directly in front are vast oyster beds, and in December the turtle—the "green turtle soup" kind—swarm in to feed and are caught. Deer, turkeys, quail, in fact all kinds of game; fish, from saw-fish and sharks, to mullets and bass.

And then the climate! Rarely, even in summer, does the thermometer indicate more than 85 degrees. A south-east breeze blows in summer all night long, making the nights cool and comfortable. It is the very paradise for the consumptive, the fountain of youth for him with pulmonary complaint of whatever kind. But two frosts for twenty years have occurred, and those not serious. This description of climate will answer for nearly the whole river, modified only by the slight difference in latitude. The waters of the Gulf Stream lave the coast, tempering the wind in winter. One of the surgeons in the army stationed here during the Seminole war, after sixteen years' service, gave it as his opinion that this immediate country was the healthiest in the United States. Absolutely free from disease, 'tis said that the people are obliged to remove to the next county

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to die. When better means of transportation are offered, the whole river will be the winter rendezvous of thousands of health-seekers and sportsmen, who now shiver the winter through on the St. Johns.

There is but one annoyance—insects. For real tall and lofty jumping and biting, the flea is unapproachable; but his endeavors are put to shame by the mosquitoes and sand-flies. The flea may be avoided, if hotel-haunted and hog-haunted sections are avoided. The mosquito may be kept at bay at night, his hunting season, by a good "bar"; but unless one is provided with an impregnable skin and a large stock of patience, he will be sure to break some of the commandments over the sand-flies. Snakes are not numerous enough to be dangerous, except in swamps, where the tourist need not go. This, in a word, is the good and bad of Indian river.

Twenty miles below Fort Pierce is the St. Lucie river, coming in from the westward, forming a beautiful bay as it joins the waters of the lagoon. Three miles south of St. Lucie the broad sound suddenly ends, and after a chain of small lakes, as it were, the channel winds through densely-covered mangrove islands, scarcely fifty yards in width.

An adverse wind, and consequently current, kept us at the mouth of Jupiter Narrows two days. We passed the time shooting turkeys and alligators, and watching the graceful "man-o'-war hawks," as they sailed overhead on wide-extended wings. The ocean beach presented many attractions; the beautiful sea beans and shells of exquisite tints, besides vast multitudes of birds. Sometimes we would find cocoanuts and fragments of foreign wood, thrown up by the resistless waters. The

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third day of waiting we entered the Narrows, the most interesting portion of this vast lagoon. From a point a hundred miles north it stretches away south-east, now expanding, now contracting, till from a width of eight miles near its northern end it is here less than fifty feet. Each side of us the mangroves rise far overhead, sometimes mingling their leaves in an arch of living green. Their gnarled roots strike down into the mud in every direction, supporting the trunk in mid-air many feet from the ground. What a number of roots! Roots from the trunk, with minor roots springing from them in every conceivable direction; roots from the branches, and these again with smaller roots of their own. Here, a mile or so in, is a luxuriant hammock, where a man named Peck undertook to subjugate the rank growth, but the mosquitoes and sand-flies proved too many for him, and his bones rest peacefully, etc. Here is a small spring, and the water cask had better be filled.

No sound breaks the solemn hush, except the tap of the setting-pole and the ripple of water at our bow, as we slowly forge ahead.

A noticeable feature in the green walls about us is the India rubber. Whenever a clump of palms occurs we find this tree, enfolding in its trunk the stem of a palm. The rapidly growing walls gradually encircle the palm in an embrace of living wood, till finally it is seen only through the interstices in the rubber. As the tops of the respective trees intermingle—the feathery frond of the palm and waxy, green leaves of the rubber—a beautiful effect is produced. Delicate ferns grown in the mesh-work, and gorgeous epiphytes, with flaming spikes of blossom, attach themselves to the branches. Ironwood, crabwood, and many other valuable woods are

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found along the shore of Hobè Sound, into which we emerge from the Narrows. Near its entrance we saw the carcass of a manatee, or sea-cow, over which a coroner's jury of vultures were holding inquest. From the south end of the Narrows, which are seven miles in length, it is twelve miles to the end of the river. Crossing "Conch Bar," we follow the stakes indicating the channel, and soon see the dome-shaped lantern, and afterward the symmetrical shaft of Jupiter Light. During all our voyage, our course has ever been to the south. Soon we strike the waters of the Lokohatchee, which coming from the west, unite with Indian river near the lighthouse, and run due east, through Jupiter Inlet to the ocean. Rounding the point, we are soon at anchor, and ascend the steep bank to a small house of coquina rock, where we are made welcome.

This was at noon. At night I climbed, with the two keepers, to the top of the hollow shaft, and looked off from the circling platform upon a scene of absorbing interest. A glimpse of northern wildness and sterility, and southern luxuriance and fertility, the fragile flowers of the tropics blended with the hardy shrubs and trees of the north. The palm and pine, the oak and orange, mangrove and maple. "Semi-tropical" indicates Florida's status in climate and vegetation. Half northern, half southern—a kind of half-and-half character that extends to more than climate. We have here a land and water view of surpassing beauty. The broad Atlantic bounds the vision east, its shores extending in curving lines from north to south. Down from the north comes Indian river, curved in outline—a bay, a creek, fringed with palm, pine, and mangrove. From the west comes in the Lokohatchee, charming in parks of pine and green

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mangrove islands; its windings reveal it in sheets of silver among the trees. A narrow creek leads from it southward toward Lake Worth. As I looked upon this scene I saw no sign of life, save at the cottage, one hundred and fifty feet below me. North, the nearest human habitation was forty miles away; south, one hundred; west, no one knows; the swamps and forests there are peopled only by red men.

The sun's last rays had disappeared, leaving clouds of crimson and gold piled up behind the dark pine forest, as I entered the lantern, where the light was already glowing. I seated myself in the crystal dome, and watched the reflected colors as they came and went with each revolution of the lantern. As the lantern revolves, every prism catches the rays of light and rends them into their primary colors, paints the colors of the rainbow upon the polished roof, and throws them forward to be reproduced a thousand times in the crystal bars. As the strong light shone forth, I thought of the many eyes gazing upon it other than those of the sailors for whom it was intended. The timid deer, the ferocious puma and wild cat, the bear from his "hammock"—for bears do have "hammocks"—of palms. No doubt the reflected light is visible to the Indians dwelling upon the prairie bordering that mysterious lake, Okeechobee. Toward midnight a little warbler fluttered against the glass, striving to enter. The keeper has often found them after storms. The large plates have been shattered by birds, who were afterward found lifeless with mangled breasts. Many birds foreign to our country have flown against the glittering, though fatal glass.

Once a year the supply-ship visits this place, in its annual tour from Maine to Florida. Other than this

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visit from Uncle Sam, the inhabitants of Jupiter have few visitors. A few stray waifs from the North drift down upon them, brighten them with their presence awhile, set their sails again, and disappear in the gloom of the mangroves. Indian river, once visited, leaves a longing in the heart of the visitant never satisfied, till the sparkle of its waters again gladden his eye, and his tent is pitched upon its sunny sands. Certainly no other section of our country possesses so many natural charms, united with real blessings, so easily accessible.

FRED BEVERLY.

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XXIII.

SHOOTING AT SALT LAKE.

NOMINALLY three miles in length by two in breadth, this little lake is reduced to half that area in the low stages of water, thus accounting for the landing of the steamer in a creek a mile or more away. A vast plain of waving reeds and salt grass surrounds the lake on three sides; on the eastern, the pine woods come down to the shore, offering the only landing. Having boats of our own we succeeded in evading the extortionate charges of the lightermen, and pitched our tent in the pine barrens, a mile from the lake.

The morning after our arrival I sailed out to taste the pleasures my observations the day previous had prepared me for. The breezy freshness of that morning comes to me now as I write, laden with the odor of flowers and the songs of birds. The quail called from an old field in the hammock; the woodpecker rattled joyously over the pines, and that odd bird, the fish-crow, "haw-hawed" from the broad limbed, moss-draped live-oaks. As I reached the shore, I caused a flutter in the vast swarm of the *tringinæ* feeding there, and provoked the "killdee," that pest of the shore, to send forth a warning cry. Overhead, the graceful seamews winged their way, anon dipping into the water for food. The fish-hawk drew from the lake a mighty bass, but hushed his

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exultant screams, and fled in sudden terror before the piratical attack of the eagle. Ranged along the shore were the various representatives of the heron family, from the watchful great blue to the wary and graceful snowy heron. Started up the busy multitude upon the shore, I let fly a single barrel at them, picking up near thirty birds, yellow-legs, killdee, and red-breasted snipe. Then (for I wasn't bloodthirsty at all, and cared more for variety than quantity), I deposited my birds in a place of safety, and cautiously waded through the long matted grass, the abode of moccasin snakes, to a space swept clean by fire. Scarcely had my feet touched its border, when my ear was delighted with the sound, welcome to all sportsmen, "scaip, scaip," denoting the presence of genuine snipe. From every side, before, behind, came that welcome "scaip," as the birds arose at my approach, or at the report of my gun. Wisps of them would launch into the air, whence after a few fantastic evolutions they would return to earth again. I frequently got double shots, and might have loaded myself, but as there was no one near to share the sport, and future wants might need supply here, I drew off early, depositing my booty with their cousins of the shore. This was sufficient for the small birds, and launching my boat and running out from the little creek, I made an onslaught on a flock of coots (for coots' breasts and drumsticks are good, well boiled), and then skirted a broad bay, where were feeding large flocks of pin-tail ducks, teal, and scattered groups of black ducks. Without inflicting upon the reader a detailed account of the approach, through blind ponds, and within shot of countless hundreds of busy plover and snipe, I will add

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that there shortly reposed a goodly pile of well-favored ducks in the bottom of my boat.

It was now near noon, and while munching my frugal lunch, I cast about me for some larger game more worthy of my labor. Running my eye along the shore, I saw, wherever a sandy reach stood out from the reedy margin, dozens of long, black objects stretched motionless upon the snowy sand. These were alligators which the sun had called from the depths of the lake to enjoy his beams in the open air. There were all sorts and sizes, from the little snapper, a foot long, to the old bull alligator of a dozen feet in length, patriarch of a large tribe. Softly paddling my boat up a crooked creek, I watched the "'gators" as they slipped off the banks into the water, where they would remain an instant watching me, then disappear. Soon came my opportunity; rounding a sharp curve, I discovered a nine-footer, fast asleep, with mouth wide open. The vulnerable parts of the alligator are the eye, ear, and the heart, reached by placing a shot behind the fore leg. This I well knew, but just as I sighted his ear, a snake slipped into the water, distracting my attention a trifle, and the bulk of the charge was placed too far behind. It seemed to be effectual, however, and running my boat alongside, I essayed to roll him in. As his paws were working convulsively, affording no hold, I stuck my bowie knife full into his eye to facilitate operations. This seemed to have an enlivening effect, for he at once commenced a series of gymnastic evolutions that would have struck terror to the heart of Dio Lewis himself. Finding that he was retreating toward the creek, carrying my eighteen-inch bowie with him, I seized my gun and stretched him upon his back with quivering paws. Then rolling him into the boat, I soon had him at the land-

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ing. As the best time to skin an alligator is while he is warm, and some say kicking, I skinned him at once. Cutting a slit down the back of each paw, and running a continuous line from the under jaw to the tail, just below the bony mail, on each side, I removed the skin easily by pulling from the tail toward the head.

Observing an alligator on my way back, seemingly two feet longer than the one secured, I determined to capture him. Rowing cautiously along shore, I at length espied him crawling under water toward a narrow though deep creek. Getting between him and the object he was aiming for, I stopped him, and he finally seemed convinced that the best thing he could do was to lie still. I fancied I could discern a sinister gleam in his eye, that boded evil in case we came in contact. Placing my gun across the thwarts, and pushing carefully toward him, I held myself in readiness for attack at any moment. But he seemed to fancy himself so secure with the slight covering of water over him that the boat almost grazed his side before I had sent the contents of one barrel of my gun into his ear. Contrary to my expectations he lay motionless, and instead of shooting the boat out of reach of his tail, as I was prepared to do, I lay alongside, and passed over his head a noose of stout line preparatory to towing him ashore. No sooner did he feel the line tightening about his throat than he concluded to come to life again, and after a few preliminary kicks and flourishes, proceeded to roll over and over, much to my grief and discomfiture. With strange shortsightedness I had omitted to cast off the line from the bow of the boat, and now that the 'gator was winding it about him with the rapidity of a patent windlass, I suddenly thought of it; but it was too late. Bracing

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myself against the rail of the boat, I held on till my arms seemed about to bid me good-by, and the sides of the boat cracked again and again. Then he stopped, but just as I had dropped the line and started for my gun, he commenced again. This time he untwisted what he had twisted before, and commenced twisting in another direction, and when he had drawn out the last available inch, and I was thinking sadly what a good boat this used to be, and whether my friends would find me before dark, he stopped again. In gratitude for this action on his part I ought to have cut the line and let him go; but no, my blood was up, and I determined to conquer at all hazards. Carefully drawing the gun toward me, I opened a ragged hole in the top of his skull in such short metre that he hadn't time to tighten up on the rope. Then after resting and reloading, I attempted to roll him into the boat. This time he was as dead as it is possible for 'gator to be, I knew; but when, just as I had him poised on the rail, he made a fearful lunge and came down in the boat where I had wanted him, I was astonished. I was so astonished that I immediately jumped out on the other side, where the water was leg-deep, in order to get a better view. When I had looked at him to my satisfaction, I didn't get in. Oh, no. That boat was only built for one; two crowded. Though his head seemed as inanimate as a log of wood, his tail seemed charged with concentrated lightning. A little wriggle, and the thwarts would fly in all directions. A short, sharp rap and the boat seemed to crack from stem to stern. If a dead alligator acted thusly, how would one in the "full vigor of early manhood" act? I began to fear I had "missed my calling"; that alligator shooting was not my forte. The more I

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thought it over, the stronger was my conviction. By rapid calculation, the boat would go to pieces in just eighty seconds. Then where, oh, where would I be?

It was half a mile to the landing, and deep creeks and bays intervening. My friends were all hunting further east. Seeing just then that he had stopped wriggling, I ventured to get into the boat. I have an impression that I didn't make much noise; and I also have an impression that I made that half a mile in tolerably quick time, and the perspiration that streamed down my face wasn't altogether caused by the heat.

Gathering my birds together, I returned to camp, to find my friends engaged in skinning a deer they had just shot, and planning an excursion to a neighboring lake for heron. Notwithstanding my weariness, after placing a pound or two of venison and slapjacks where they would benefit me most, I was ready, and launched upon the lake just as the sun went down. Having a trolling spoon, I drew forth from their retreat several broad-tailed black bass, with mouths like steel traps and possessed of the strength of young alligators. After an hour's rowing and wading, we burst through the canebrake and emerged into a little lake, upon one side of which was a long, low, willow island, from which scores of herons silently flew away. Concealing ourselves, we waited. Soon they came; by dozens and fifties the immaculate and glossy plumaged birds approached. Then the firing commenced, and continued till each one was satisfied and ready to return. Emerging from the canes, and rowing across the lake, we returned to camp laden with birds nearly as large as ourselves. In the soft moonlight we looked strange and ghost-like, with our burdens of white. Leaving the preparation of the birds

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till the morrow, we kicked together the embers, arranged afresh the light-wood knots, and soon had a delicious aroma of coffee and venison enveloping us. Then to our beds of pine boughs, to sleep as only tired hunters can. Such was a representative day at Salt Lake; one of many with varied scenes and incidents.

FRED BEVERLY.

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XXIV

THE OKEECHOBEE EXPEDITION.

WE had what might be called a stormy voyage. The very night that saw the Virginius in such peril, we sighted the light off Frying-pan Shoals—just caught a glimpse of it, only to be driven away far east of the Gulf Stream. Four times did we cross the Gulf Stream. For a week we lay to under double-reefed spanker and foresail, drifting with the waves. Dolphins and porpoises, Gulf weed, and Portuguese men-o'-war swam and drifted in the water near us, but they failed to excite the interest they ought, for the reason that the objects we sought on the shores of Florida were far away. The New Year brought a blessing, for upon that day we first descried the long, low line far in the distance that told us of the land we sought. The next day the palms appeared above the horizon, but it was sunset ere we were boarded by the pilots and were threading the tortuous windings of the channel, in tow of the little steamer belonging to the port.

Mosquito Inlet, our destination, is in about lat. 29°, long. 81°, fifty-five miles south of St. Augustine, and one-third the way down the Florida coast. It is about a mile in width, with two channels, obstructed by sand-bars, having a depth of seven to nine feet. It is the out-watering of two large lagoons, the Mosquito North, or

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Halifax river, and the Mosquito South, or Hillsboro' river. Thirty miles each extends, meeting in a common channel at the inlet. Close in is Massacre Bluff, with its tragical history of the murder of shipwrecked sailors by Indians, early in the Indian war. Two miles further is Mount Pleasant, a high shell bluff, upon which is the residence of Major Alden, a Massachusetts man, whose hospitality many have shared. A mile further is Lowd's Hotel, the only one here, and one of the three houses constituting the town of New Smyrna. This place is about thirty miles from the St. Johns, at Enterprise, the road to which fully maintains the reputation of Florida roads generally. Though to a stranger the hotel at New Smyrna may present few attractions, being fronted by a muddy creek and backed by a dense forest, it is filled to overflowing every winter, the same boarders forming its quota each succeeding season. The mystery is partly explained when one has enjoyed its hospitalities. Probably the superb fishing of Mosquito Inlet has much to do toward maintaining its popularity as a winter resort. There is the usual variety of game found on the Florida coast. The narrow peninsulas, both north and south of the inlet, are well stocked with deer and bear, and many panthers and wild-cats find refuge there. The woods back of the hotel, between New Smyrna and Enterprise, are tolerably well filled with deer, though it is said the panthers have driven away the turkeys. At the inlet are large flocks of curlew, bay snipe, "peep," shearwaters and plover, affording excellent sport to the juvenile gunners at the hotel. But by far the best section for procuring large game is the immense Turnbull swamp, near the head of Indian river, abounding in deer, turkeys, panther, and bear.

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Any old field will furnish its bevy of quail. Besides the means of communication with Jacksonville, via St. Johns, costing about fifteen dollars, there is a small schooner which makes the trip as often as the wind will permit; fare five dollars. The only business of New Smyrna is in live-oak, which, in the hands of one firm, employs many schooners the winter through. On both lagoons are large groves of delicious oranges, noted for their size and flavor. The guava, pomegranate, fig, and banana will flourish here, and have been successfully grown.

There are several good guides here, and they can be hired at the usual rates by addressing, at New Smyrna, Volusia county, M. Lewis, Dr. Fox, or Frank Gains. The best location for building or camping is at Mount Pleasant, where the channel runs close by the wharf, with sixteen feet of water. We camped there upon its shelly shore, and passed two pleasant weeks. The weather was unusually cold, even closing the jaws, if they have jaws, of the blood-thirsty mosquito for a time, and causing that omnipresent oldest inhabitant to declare that no such had occurred before since the great frost of '35. Yet we would have days delicious in their dreamy warmth, when the air of a morning would be full of the music of robin and red-bird. "We," comprehends myself and a young man, a friend, of my own age, who was to accompany me upon my boat excursions, and remain at camp while I was absent upon my explorations inland. We then had a tent that had done service on the St. Johns, which I had brought more for the good it had done that from any love I bore it. It was called the "lawn tent," and resembled the tents figured as belonging to the children of Israel. It was well adapted to the

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covering of a large surface, but in a "norther" we had to get out guys in every direction, and then stand outside and hang on, while the winds howled and floods descended. We had two boats. I had named the larger the Forest and Stream, though I quaked inwardly whenever I happened to think, What if the proprietors of that paper should see her? I had her built to carry a heavy load in shallow water, and told her builder to sacrifice everything else to strength and lightness—and he did. She was twenty-one feet long by seven feet beam amidships, flat bottom, centre-board, rigged with two small sails. I had always stood in awe of her, and was much relieved when after she had lain idle nearly two weeks, a rash sailor asked me if he could sail her, and when he came back and said she worked splendidly, I could have embraced him. When the boat was loaded with our freight I saw the wisdom of my instructions to the builder, for she was full to overflowing. And so, one pleasant day we started down the Hillsboro', laden almost to the water's edge. We were fortunate in getting a tow down the river for nearly twenty miles.

The Hillsboro', for twenty miles, is filled with mangrove and marshy islands, making many exceedingly tortuous channels difficult to follow. Shipyard Reach, fifteen miles south of Smyrna, is a noted place for ducks; but the best of all grounds is a little below on the west channel, where they come to a little pool to drink all day long. Parties have been here and shot a hundred to the man in half a day's shooting. Bissett's orange mound is a favorite place; here the wild oranges glow and gleam through the dark foliage, covering a shell mound, at whose base is a drinking pool where the ducks flock by scores. October and November are the best months,

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and again in March, the interim being spent by the greater part of the mass of ducks wintering in Florida further south.

From New Smyrna south occur a great many shell and earth mounds of ancient origin, several of which I have explored, and the results of which explorations I shall publish in a future letter.

The Mosquito lagoon commences at the Devil's Elbow, a channel of the Hillsboro' where there are nine crooks in half a mile. We passed safely through the Devil's Elbow, and arrived at the head-quarters of the Swifts, proprietors of the live-oak interest here. From Captain Swift and his employees we have received the kindest attention. Mosquito lagoon is here two miles in breadth and ten miles to the canal connecting this lagoon system with Indian river. There are several orange groves on this lagoon, both wild and cultivated. We entered the canal about noon one day, passing the first stake half a mile north, and standing away south-east till opposite the canal. The eastern end is invisible till directly at its mouth, owing to bushes and sand-bars. The canal is about half a mile long and twelve feet wide. Connecting the Indian river lagoon with the Mosquito, it forms with them an inside route of water travel over one hundred and eighty miles in length. The water was at the highest when we entered, yet we barely passed through, drawing but a foot. Fallen coquina has narrowed the passage to seven feet in some places. The coquina is curiously hollowed by the water, leaving overhanging arches supported by pillars fantastically wrought. The kingfisher has driven his shafts into the rock, and then occupied them. A large tree, with table-shaped top, stands near the eastern end, and can be seen a

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long way, forming a conspicuous land-mark. There is good camping ground near here, and an abundance of fish and ducks close by. Deer and bear range the hammocks north. We camped that night at Andrew Jackson's. Andrew has the neatest little orange grove on the river. Close by, two miles, is the famous Dummitt orange grove, so often described. Captain Dummitt, the original owner of this grove, died a year ago. He was an old resident, and highly respected. The grove is now owned by his three daughters and two others. This year's crop is estimated at 125,000, fully as many having been blown off in a tremendous gale last autumn. Two smaller groves near here have, respectively, four and eight thousand. It is about sixteen miles from the canal to the head of the river, and ten miles to Sand Point, upon the west bank of the river. The buildings of Aurantia Grove, so much advertised, can be seen about seven miles up the river. I had no time to visit it, and so cannot speak of its merits from observation. The land is said to be good, worth $1.25 per acre. Indian river needs for its proper development a railroad to Lake Harney, the head of navigation on the St. Johns, or a new canal to Mosquito lagoon, with light-draught steamers plying between Jacksonville and the lagoon. The railroad is the more feasible route, perfectly practicable, and would probably pay. The distance to be traversed is said to be but thirteen miles. A small steamer is needed upon the river, and three good hotels—one at the head of the river or lagoon, one midway, and one near the southern end. Then this delightful climate might be enjoyed by the thousands now kept away by the difficulties attending transportation and lack of

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accommodations. The present route, via Salt Lake, is very tedious, and uncomfortably long.

We crossed the river one night after waiting two days for a wind. The water was all aglow with phosphorescent light. Every dash of our little boat raised a silver shower, and thousands of fish darted hither and thither, leaving tortuous trails of fire, like those Fourth of July serpents of our boyhood. Rafts of ducks sprang up with noise like thunder, invisible but for the fiery shower they raised upon leaving the water. It was midnight before we reached Harvey's, and anchored. It is six miles across to Salt Lake. There is a settlement a mile from the river, where also is a small boarding house. There is but one building at the landing, a store. Here, for the first time, the visitor from the North sees the palmetto, in the long columnar rows, so characteristic of the Indian river. Two days we passed here and at Titusville, two miles below, awaiting a fair wind. The hotel at the latter place is the only one on the river, and is said to be well kept; $3 per day is charged for transient boarders. Board at the settlement is $1.50 per day. This is the northernmost of the four post-offices on the river. A mail is supposed to arrive and depart once a week, but it really arrives and leaves with the wind. Very fine specimens of native woods may be procured here, such as the crabwood, royal palm, mangrove, palmetto, and iron wood, made into canes, etc. Titusville owes all of its present prosperity to the indefatigable energy of its proprietor, Colonel H. T. Titus. This place is only noteworthy as a point of the arrival and departure for more interesting points on the river. For ducks one must go across the river to Dummitt's, ten miles, or to Banana creek, still further. For deer, to Mer-

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ritt's Island, or to the prairies bordering Salt or South lakes. Boatmen and guides can be hired to any point on the lagoon and interior. James Stewart, captain of the Blonde, is perfectly trustworthy and reliable. Jim Russell is thoroughly posted upon the game and fish of Indian river, and will be found of great value to any party contemplating a winter's camp here. Address them at Sandy Point, which is the old name for Titusville.

I visited some old acquaintances here, and walked over to the store of a man named Joyners. I was much surprised to find him apparently overjoyed to meet me, the more so as we had met but once. My heart warmed as he poured forth congratulation and welcome, and I thought here was one true friend, if he did have a suspicious squint in one eye and never once looked me square in the face. What was my disgust to find, upon returning to the boat, that he had despatched a "justice" to arrest me for an alleged violation of the license law, in giving a man, whom I had hired, an old coat. A friend told the justice he thought he'd better not trouble me, and the justice departed, saying he "thought so too." We left Titusville at daybreak one morning. The wind gradually increased, till at noon it was blowing half a gale, and we were very glad to seek shelter behind Oleander Point, about twenty-five miles from Sand Point. A gale is the specialty in which Indian river excels; either a gale or a calm. But then this is a stormy winter, though it is hard to realize it with the thermometer at shirt-sleeve temperature. Oleander Point is formed of disintegrated shells, white as snow, the beach ending in a crescent-shaped bar. South of this beach is a coquina formation, extending for miles, where

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the rocks are worn into every shape imaginable. A Mr. Hardee lives here, whose grove of three-year-old trees is the finest I have seen. He has splendid oranges, from trees only three years from the bud. His crop brought a dollar per hundred more in Savannah than the St. Johns oranges.

We slept upon the beach that night, beneath a lean-to tent which my friend, who is an old camper-out, had put up between two palmettoes. The cheerful blaze in front made it far preferable to our close quarters aboard the boat. The next afternoon, the wind abating, we set sail, and at night, the wind increasing, made a camp on the shores of Horse creek. This is a high coquina bluff of pine land, a fine place for camp or residence. Nearly opposite is the southern end of Merritt's Island, whose high, pine-covered shores have been in sight for the last twenty-five miles. Just south of here, three miles, is Elbow creek, which was to be the terminus of a canal to connect Indian river with Lake Washington, on the St. Johns. The scheme is now "busted," and Indian river will have to seek connection with the outside world elsewhere. At Turkey creek, fifteen miles south, is a fine orange and banana grove, where huge bunches of the latter fruit can be purchased at $1 per hundred. St. Sebastian is twelve miles from Turkey creek. It is a beautiful sheet of water, and the camper-out will find here secure shelter during gales. From Horse creek we were assisted by that veteran guide and boatman, Jim Russell. What Jim don't know about Indian river is not worth knowing. He has spent twenty years here, and can tell to a certainty just where and when the rarest birds are to be found, where to go for deer, bear, or panther. Jim, then, took us in charge, and kept us

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through the Narrows, with a dim vision of Pelican Island north of the entrance; by Indian River Inlet, old Fort Capron, and anchored us at two o'clock one morning just as the moon sank out of sight, at Fort Pierce. Here we made our final camp, one hundred and thirty miles south of our starting point at New Smyrna.

Fort Pierce is the name given to this place during the Indian war, when there was a military station here. Here it was, according to history, that the famous chieftain, Wild Cat, Coacoochee, was captured and sent west. The old parade ground, made over thirty years ago, is still in good condition, south of the present site of Fort Pierce, or "St. Lucie." The best turtling and oyster grounds are here, and splendid fishing at the inlet, three miles east. There is a party of gentlemen camped just north of here. They are enthusiastic sportsmen, and have been fishing Jupiter Inlet and Indian River Inlet *with flies*. Their success was wonderful. They tell me that they caught crevallè, bone-fish, and blue-fish; the bone-fish and crevallè making hard fight and splendid sport.

I have photographed the most noteworthy and picturesque features of Indian river and Mosquito lagoon, and the negatives are carefully preserved for future manipulation. Within the week that has elasped since my arrival, I have thoroughly explored the country between the river and the cypress bordering Lake Okeechobee, walking and riding one hundred miles in four days, over, or rather through, a submerged tract of country, visiting my old friends the Indians, and discovering new facts. In closing, I will recapitulate the different camping grounds and haunts of game, promising a better list in some future number.

For fish, go to New Smyrna, Indian River Inlet, or

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Jupiter. For duck, Mosquito lagoon and Hillsboro', at the places already mentioned; the marshes between Black Point and the canal; at Dummitt's, Pelican Island, near the Narrows, and St. Lucie Sound. Ten-mile creek, ten miles back of Fort Pierce, also abounds in teal and wood duck. For deer and bear, Turnbull's Hammock, near New Smyrna; Merritt's Island, and the beach ridge three miles from the southern end; the Narrows; St. John's Prairie, five miles west of Capron, and beyond. For turkey, St. John's Prairie and about St. Lucie Sound. There are good camping sites at Indian River canal, Jones' Point, Addison Point, Horse creek, Turkey creek, Merritt's Island, south end, St. Sebastian, Barker's Bluff, Fort Capron, Fort Pierce, and at various points along St. Lucie Sound. Water may be procured almost anywhere by digging a shallow pit in the sand. For other information upon Indian river I refer the reader to my article previously written. A party of four could enjoy the pleasures of sporting here to best advantage. Let them come as I have, with everything necessary for the winter, prepared to "rough it," if need be, and my word for it they will depart with a desire to come again. A friend of mine purposes erecting a commodious hotel near St. Lucie, where everything needful to the perfect enjoyment of this region of game and health will be at command. The guides to Indian river are few, but I can recommend James Stewart, Charles Stewart, John Houston, Rufus Stewart, and Burton Williams.

It is a fact beyond doubt that the whooping crane (*Grus Americanus*) is a resident of Florida. There has been seen for many years, upon Alligator Flats, about twenty miles from Fort Capron, Indian river, a large

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white bird, "as tall as a man," which the native Floridans called a "stork." Last year the young of this bird was taken from a nest and brought to Fort Capron, where it was kept till over six months old. The plumage of this bird was white from the first. It was a whooping crane, if the description of its possessors was correct, as it agreed exactly in specific characteristics with the description of the whooping crane. For many years these birds have roamed over the Alligator Flats, and about the prairies of the headwaters of the St. Johns. Their large size and loud cry have always made them conspicuous, and the "cow hunters" of the backwoods, not knowing any other bird so large, have given them the name of "stork." The sand-hill crane is very plentiful here, and there is no cause for the belief that the two species are confounded. The great white heron, the (*Audubonia occidentalis*), is the only other bird approaching the whooping crane in size, and likely to be mistaken by ignorant people for it, and the supposition that it may be this species is precluded by the habits and *habitat* of that bird. We think this the first recorded instance of the discovery of this species in Florida, though we may be mistaken.

The Everglade kite (*Rostrhamus sociabilis*) has been shot upon the St. Johns prairies by your correspondent, and he believes that he will find the eggs of that bird this season. The specimens procured were in the adult and young plumage.

Authentic information of the discovery of the eggs of the paroquet (*Conurus Carolinensis*), has been obtained, and it is confidently expected that they will be secured the coming season.

Indian river in April is as beautiful, its skies as

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serene, and its waters as untroubled as in January; but Indian river in April is not the river it was in January, for all that. Its visitors from the North, the Yankees, have departed—and its visitors from the South, the insects, have arrived. The temperature in April does not vary much from that of March; the mornings are deliciously cool, and the afternoons—well, they are warm. Sixty-five in the morning at sunrise; ninety at noon; a breeze from the south all day, and a gale from the west all night.

When I had returned to St. Lucie from Okeechobee, my friend at head-quarters wanted to leave; and it was only to allow me a flying trip to the Seminole town that he would remain. The reasons he urged for departing were "insects." Fleas and mosquitoes might have their uses, might be a blesssing to mankind, but too many fleas and a superabundance of mosquitoes were worse than none at all; and so long as that grind-stone was left out of doors for them to sharpen their bills on, so long was life a burden to him. And so we sailed away from St. Lucie. A few miles from St. Lucie is Indian River Inlet, where the fishing is superb and the mosquitoes abundant. We went over to the inlet one day, with my old guide Jim to assist us. The memory of that day's sport will not soon fade away—bass, sheepshead, crevallè—all bit well, and fully sustained the reputation accorded this inlet as the best fishing ground on the coast. Jim had been hunting in the scrub along the sand ridge, and returned to the boat as I hauled in my last fish, bloody and torn. There was blood on his face, blood on his hands, hair and rifle. His shirt and pants were torn and likewise bloody. In reply to my questions he remarked in a careless way that he had run a-foul of

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a catamount, and that "the beast had showed fight." When I requested him to bring along his catamount, he said it was out there in the sand, and that if I wanted it I might get it. Though I had doubts of the existence of said catamount, I went as directed, and did actually find one, a beautiful creature, about four feet in length, curiously spotted and striped, and with tufted ears. Jim had discovered four of them, had wounded one and then captured him. It was just here that I was camped one night two years ago. Jim was with me, and performed a feat that many men would shrink from.

The captain of a little schooner had got his anchor caught beneath a sunken mangrove and was going to cut his cable and leave it, when Jim volunteered to dive for and get it up. The water was alive with sharks—this place is noted for them—and the anchor was twenty feet under water; but Jim, after giving me instructions in case he was attacked, dived repeatedly, with the sharks swarming about our little boat, and a rapid current running, till he had accomplished his purpose. Opposite the inlet, two miles, is the residence of Judge Paine, where board and lodging can be obtained, I presume, as the Judge has a snug little house, with two rooms and beds. He also has a noble pack of hounds, which do duty at the gate. They are very affectionate, these hounds are, and one of them formed an almost inseparable attachment for the calf of my leg one day as I went there for my mail.

The hunting here is not so good as the fishing, though deer may be obtained in the scrub and pine woods, and quail at the old Russell plantation. Fire hunting is the mode usually adopted for shooting deer and other animals. That is, fire hunting *was* the

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method. The principal charm of fire hunting lies in the uncertainty attending it, as to what you may kill. A man goes out, horseback or a-foot, with a pole over his shoulder, lashed to the end of which is an old frying-pan, in which is a fire of light-wood. The blaze throws a lane of light ahead of him, leaving him in darkness. The eye of a deer reflects that light, so that all the bearer of the frying-pan has to do is to "blaze away" at the eye. There is a deal of sport in this style of hunting. I remember a night's experience at South Lake, where I followed my guide about all night looking for eyes. We didn't see any eyes, but we had glorious sport. My part of it was to carry a bag of pine knots, and when my guide lowered the pan to replenish the fire with a knot. 'Twas fine sport, but grew to be a trifle monotonous toward morning. As I said before, in the uncertainty of fire hunting lies its chief attraction. Other eyes than deer's will reflect the light, and the bearer of the pan—the messenger of light we may call him—doesn't know just what particular eye he may "shine" at any particular moment. It may be the eye of an ox, or a bear, or a panther. In case it is the latter, the usual way—if the "shiner" is convinced the *shinee* is a panther—is to deposit the rifle and pan on the ground and climb a tree. Fire hunting, then, has its votaries all along the river. There is one gentleman near Fort Capron always successful. He never goes out without returning with some trophy of his skill. A few nights before I left he bagged a fine mare and colt, and was convinced that if he'd kept on he'd have killed a deer.

The inlet is the place where "B. Hackle" and his friends—thorough sportsmen, all of them—had their finest sport, here and at Jupiter. The Narrows is as

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good a place for deer as any on the river. As I was sailing through them one moonlight night, I was awakened by my boatman, and looking up, discovered a deer swimming across close to the boat. Revolver, rifle, everything had been packed away, and we lost him. Right here in the Narrows, one of my acquaintances discovered a bear swimming, and undertook his capture. As he had nothing but a hatchet, and a heavy breeze was blowing, he was forced to relinquish the bear after laying its head open, and Bruin had nearly upset the boat by getting his paws on the rail.

At Elbow creek, and across the river on the eastern shore, is the finest picturesque portion of the river. The little bay, formed as the creek reaches Indian river, is almost shut in by high coquina rocks. The shores are sandy, with high bluffs behind them. The water-worn coquina rock here is the most attractive on the river. It was here that the famous canal, to connect the St. Johns with Indian river, was to terminate. It was to be about seven miles in length. A company was formed, a dredge-boat set to work at Lake Washington, lands purchased, a town laid out on paper, and now the machinery of the boat is being transported to Sand Point for use in a saw-mill, and "Eau Gallie" has just as many inhabitants as it had before the bubble was blown. No doubt can exist as to the suitability of the locality for a town, could one be started; for the high pine land slopes gradually to the river, the climate is delightful, and annoying insects comparatively few.

Mr. Houston, the resident at Elbow creek, is an old Indian fighter, having served through the seven years of the first war. His reminiscences were interesting, especially to me, as he had fought Indians I had met at the

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Seminole town and while hunting, and fought at localities I had recently visited. A wedged-shaped coquina rock terminates Merritt's Island, two miles east of Elbow creek. The rocky shores here are worn into innumerable caverns, their roofs supported by water-wrought pillars and groined arches. The island comes down to this point, ever narrowing, till it terminates a mile north of a palm-crowned point upon the eastern shore. A deep bay is formed, crescent shaped, covered with dainty shells. Bordering this bay is a high shell bluff, covered with wild orange trees. Back of this bluff is an ancient earth mound, from which leads an elevated road-way, sixty feet in width, to the sea-beach a mile away.

Now, this place, in my belief, has a share in the tragical history attending the early settlement of Florida by the Spaniards. When Ribaut was wrecked on this coast, and fell into the hands of Menendez in 1565, a part of his force, some 200, escaped down the coast. Soon intelligence came to the Spaniards that the French were fortifying themselves and building a vessel south of Cape Canaveral. A force was despatched, which captured the greater part of the French troops, burned their vessel and destroyed their fort. The Spaniards then built another fort, which they called St. Lucie, and garrisoned it. From many proofs, I adduce the opinion that this is the site—this bluff or earth mound—of that Spanish fort. The road, from sea-beach to river, straight and wide, was probably made by the builders of the mound many years before the Spanish conquest, but it doubtless was in condition then to offer many advantages, and not, as now, overgrown with scrub and palmetto. I am not aware that the fact of the existence of this old road has ever been mentioned before—at least in this

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connection—but, from a careful examination of the ground and a comparison of existing proofs with historical description, I am convinced that I am correct. Mr. Houston found, some years ago, a bolt, evidently a large coupling-bolt, and a piece of iron resembling the trunnion of a cannon. I am convinced that a series of excavations would reveal further proofs of my views. Upon the south end of Merritt's Island, west of the shell bluff just mentioned, lives the Crusoe of the river. He has lived here some three or four years, cultivating the soil and clearing the scant hammock, till he has several acres in a high state of cultivation, with abundant crops of squashes and prickly pear. Within a year or so this Crusoe has purchased several goats, and lives there alone with them and his cat. I went over one day to pay him a visit, but he was away. His shanty and goats were still there, though, and I determined to have a picture of them. This shanty was about twenty feet long, five feet high in the middle, and about six feet wide at the base. It was made by covering a "pitch roof" with palmetto leaves, and was open at either end. Two boards formed one side and end of the bed he slept in, and the side of the shanty the other side. There was just room enough to crawl in, so filled up was it with old rope, boards, etc. It looked so snake-suggestive that none of us entered. There was an old broken-legged table, a crippled chair, a grind-stone, and a smudge-pot outside. The owner, we afterward learned, was camping out to get rid of the fleas. There are many inconveniences attending photographing in Florida, and I have had so many amusing and provoking incidents that I shall some time write a chapter of them. I set my companions to collecting and herding the goats, abou

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fifteen, near the shanty, while I set my camera and pitched my developing tent. When all was ready, I looked for my goats and saw them not. They soon appeared, however, in hot pursuit of my boatman Dan, who just escaped old Billy by climbing the fence. We soon got them in position near the shanty, with the aid of my friend and the two boatmen, and retired to my tent to prepare the negative plate. Upon emerging, I discovered that the leader of the herd had amused himself chasing my friend about the place—causing him to sit down in a bed of prickly pear, which hurt his feelings very much—and otherwise misbehaving himself. After much trouble we got them in order, and I opened the slide and congratulated myself upon getting a good picture. I hardly counted "two" before a huge old goat, with wide-spread horns, spied my camera and started on a tour of inspection. If he had started leisurely I shouldn't have cared, but he came in a hurry, as though he saw something in my direction he desired, and so I concluded to postpone the taking of that picture, shouldered my camera and travelled among the cacti in a way that brought tears to my eyes and tears to the eyes of my friends on the fence. I never did love goats; and if that goat had seemed at all open to conviction I should have stopped and told him what I thought of goats in general, and him in particular. But I didn't stop, but kept right on, leaped the bank and gained the boat, just as he struck it with his horns. Then he went back and stood peacefully chewing his cud. And I think he is still there, for I didn't go back to alarm him.

As most of Florida visitors are aware, Sand Point is the principal place on the river, or lagoon, and about the only point the visitor sees—he is so tired and worn

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by the ride there that he goes no further. I don't know that the people of this section are more avaricious than in any other—indeed, I have always found the residents generous and hospitable—but the temptation to bleed a man with money is irresistible where money is so scarce. Along the St. Johns, at the hotels, it is worse than on Indian river. It is just as a "cracker" expressed it one day at St. Lucie. He came to my friend, the doctor, with a bottle in his hand containing some unhappy bugs he had captured. Says he:

"Doctor, I reck'n I've gut a curosty fer yer."

"Ah!"

"Yis; when you uns was done gone inter Okeechobee, I cought these yer animils fer yer. Ye see, I was a cuttin' down a cabbage palmeteer and found these yer into the middle on't; and as I never seed any like 'em I jest put 'em in a bottle, and hev been a feedin' 'em nigh on two weeks. I s'pose you want 'em, don't yez?"

"Well, yes, I'll take them; how much for them?"

The bugs were worthless, but the doctor always made a point of taking whatever was brought, as sometimes he secured something of value.

"Wall, I don't know; I reck'n about *two dollars* a piece!"

"Do you think that enough, Mr. T.?"

"Wall, they'se been a heap uv trouble to me, an' I've neglected my grubbin' to feed them thar critters, an' I railly suppose they's worth considerable more, but I didn't know *how much you Yankees would stand!*"

That is the key note rung by the hotel keepers in Florida, "how much you Yankees can stand without collapsing."

At Smyrna I met Dr. Fox, the guide to the Savan-

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nah party that sought Lake Okeechobee. As has been stated, they were obliged to return after reaching Lake Kissimmee, owing to the illness of one of their number. They found an abundance of game in the islands of Lakes Kissimmee and Cypress, and the woods bordering the river. From the nature of the country bordering the upper Kissimmee, I knew that there would be an abundance of game, such as quail, turkeys, and deer, there being more "hammocks" and less real swamps than upon the lower Kissimmee. If I include the various birds and animals generally called game by many gunners, then the Kissimmee is well stocked. At the ford were hundreds of white ibis and yellow-legs and curlew, while the settlers vouched for several flocks of turkeys in the "hammocks." Deer were comparatively abundant out on the prairies, wild-cats plentiful, while only a few nights before our arrival, a panther had put in an appearance at a settler's cabin, while the man was away, and carried away a hog before the eyes of the settler's wife and children. One of the party had a Remington, No. 12 bore, 30-in. breech-loader along, and made quick work with whatever birds came within range. The execution of this gun is remarkable, and we could shoot with equal ease the smallest warbler or largest heron or hank. Its simplicity of construction, plainness, and cheapness, make it just the gun for the collector. This gun, with my 9-in. Remington revolver, was amply sufficient in the way of fire-arms, though we had encumbered ourselves with several other weapons.

There will, undoubtedly, be many visitors to the Okeechobee and Kissimmee region next winter, and I doubt not that the sporting facilities will be thoroughly tested. The boat in which I made my trip I sold to

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Judge Parker, a resident on the Kissimmee, near Fort Bassenger, and any party desiring to make the trip could not do better than secure control of the stanch Forest and Stream, as she is a boat well suited to the work.

I left St. Lucie, Indian river, the 14th of February. As before stated, it was my intention to have my boat transported to the Kissimmee river, and sail down that river into and around Lake Okeechobee.

This plan has been adhered to, and has resulted in a complete success. Of all the parties started for Lake Okeechobee this winter—and there seem to have been many—ours is the only one that has penetrated the Everglades and explored the lake. It is, in fact, the *only* party that has sailed completely around the lake, and brought from thence authentic information regarding its topography and natural productions. The lake is the largest in the South. Probably less has been known of this lake than of any body of water of like size in the Union, owing to the impassability of the country about it, and the alleged hostility of the Indians upon its borders. During the Indian war of 1835–'43, boats crossed up it on two occasions, ascending and descending the Kissimmee river, and scouring the cypress swamps in search of Indians. In the war of '56–'58, forts, or military stations, were located as near the lake as the character of the land would permit, and it was frequently crossed, and, no doubt, pretty thoroughly explored. But the soldiers of the last Indian war were principally militia, natives of the country, and but little knowledge of the lake was disseminated through them. Since that time Okeechobee has remained veiled in obscurity. No one but the Seminoles knew the charac-

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ter of its shores or the productions of its waters. The mystery surrounding it has been unbroken, nothing has been really known of it, until our boat was launched upon its waters. The State engineer of Florida, in 1855, expressed the opinion generally held regarding the country about the lake, when he wrote: "These lands are now, and will continue to be, nearly as much unknown as the interior of Africa, or the mountain sources of the Amazon." Fabulous stories of beautiful islands, picturesque ruins, and pirate-haunted glens, have been much in vogue with writers upon Lake Okeechobee, and to lift the veil that has so long hung over it, and narrate the plain facts, is to deprive them of a seemingly inexhaustible fund of romance. I must confess that it pains me to do so, but fidelity to truth compels me to write of the lake as it is, and not as it should be. The beautiful groves of tropical fruits, the monkeys, spiders of gigantic size, and ancient ruins, are among the things that were *not*.

There is but one practicable route to Lake Okeechobee, that via the Kissimmee river. There are, however, two routes to that river, and for the edification of the future traveller to the lake I will describe them. A good boat, provisions, and everything necessary for a month's stay, are necessary by either. The one I adopted was, as stated, from Indian river, at St. Lucie, across the country, to the location of old Fort Bassenger, on the Kissimmee river. The first ten miles is through a low open pine woods, very wet in the winter months, through which flow two deep creeks, the "Five-mile" and "Ten-mile." From Ten-mile creek the course is north of west for twenty-four miles, at first over the Alapattie Flats, submerged as late as March, and dry and alkaline in the dry season; later, a short wiry grass

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covers them, and shallow ponds, dry in the dry season, occur at intervals. The clumps of cypress here are characteristic of this section, being in long curving lines, resembling mountains at a distance. At intervals of half a dozen miles, pine islands occur, with opportunities for camping. Sixteen miles from Ten-mile creek, twenty-six from St. Lucie, the prairies of the St. Johns are taken and kept until the old military road from Fort Capron to Tampa is struck, when the course is due west for five miles through a belt of timber to the Kissimmee Prairies. This belt runs nearly north and south, separating the prairies of the Kissimmee from those of the St. Johns and the Alapattie Flats. The road over the prairies is rather obscure, as also is that to the timber upon the other side, but easily followed by a woodsman. The course is south-west. The prairie is dotted with pine islands, the last one (in which lives the only settler on the route, Judge Parker) is over two miles in width. The Kissimmee at the ford is about fifty yards wide, though it sometimes overflows its banks for two miles upon the eastern side. We had to wade a mile before launching our boat.

The other route is from Lake Jessup, or Winder, on the St. Johns, to Lake Tohopekaliga, or Cypress, the head-waters of the Kissimmee. It is said to be about forty miles overland, and one hundred and forty down the river to Bassenger. The settlers near the river knew nothing of the distance from the Fort Bassenger ford to the lake, but thought it to be sixty miles. We found it about fifty-five miles, and it took us two days to reach the lake. The river is extremely crooked, the current swift, and the water the best in south Florida. The width at the ford is maintained throughout almost its

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entire length, though narrowing in places near its mouth. During the first thirty miles are occasional live-oak and maple bluffs, but beyond that the river ran through vast plains of cane and saw-grass, and between low willows. Many lagoons make up from the river. Isolated clumps of magnolia grow in the marsh, appearing like large trees at a distance. Ten miles from the ford is a settler's cabin, the last on the river. Twenty miles from the lake is the last oak, and three miles from the lake a large cypress, from which a view of the lake can be obtained.

The Kissimmee, as it enters the lake, forms a bay a mile in width and depth, filled with lilies and water-lettuce. There are two cypress trees near its mouth, but all around is marsh. The most conspicuous birds on the river have been the limpkin, or crying bird, the white ibis, white heron, snake bird, and vulture. Black bass are plentiful and large, perch, cat-fish, and bream also abound. All the way down, on either side, is a pine ridge, from three to five miles away, sometimes approaching the river. It spreads out as it nears the lake, and maintains the same distance on the west side, and merges itself in the cypress bordering the eastern shore. It is a little over a mile to the first projection of the bay, west, where cypress and grass shoals present a dreary appearance. Back of this, however, is a drift of sand, upon which grows a thin belt of elm, maple, and elderberry, interlaced and overgrown with large grape vines. Back of this sand, which must be covered at high-water, is a dark lagoon, filled with alligators. A large fish-hawk's nest here, induced us to call this place Osprey Point. A mile further is a camping place used by Indians when hunting, all cypress. The sand is here

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six inches above the lake, and a quiet lagoon affords shelter for a boat. Detached belts of cypress and marsh occur next, and the only place suitable for camping is ten miles south-west. We called it Mulberry Camp, from the occurrence of that tree there. Besides mulberries, there are ash, maple, box-wood, cypress, India rubber and elderberry. There are gigantic cypresses here, six feet in diameter, completely enclosed in the India rubber, and covered with ivy.

The shore trends south-west for about fifteen miles from the Kissimmee, where along cypress hammock ends in a lone palmetto. Here a deep bay makes in some three miles, and is about five miles in width. At the end of this bay, the palmetto spurs from the main ridge approached within a mile. All south of this is an unbroken marsh, deeply indented with bays, from which blind creeks or "sloughs" ramify in every direction. Due south of this palmetto point is a low willow island, with but a few inches of sand above water, covered with nests of heron and snake-bird. A marsh extends to this island, and south of it is another deep bay. Below this island the shore trends southward for about eight miles, then the dip is south-east—a desolate region, with a low, dark line of willows bordering the shore. It has a very deceptive appearance, this same shore, as various shades from the light of the grass shoals to the dark of the willows, make it seem very high, and the traveller is only disenchanted by a close inspection.

About thirty miles south by west of Kissimmee is the only island in the lake affording foothold to man. It is one and a half miles long and four miles from the south-west shore. It runs north-west and south-east, and is dry upon its eastern or lake side, and marshy on the

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western, or shore side. It is nowhere more than a foot above the level of the water, a dry sand-ridge, covered with India rubber, ash, and sweet bay, with a few paw-paws in fruit and flower. Nearly half an acre, at one end, was covered with vines of the wild gourd. Upon both sides and at either end is a thick growth of willow, with some cypress. The northern end is covered with the dark vines of the *ipomea*, in which hundreds of white herons and spoonbills have built their nests. From a tall cypress here, the shore can be traced for many miles—nothing but marsh and marsh for miles, with a few palmettoes, spurs from the main ridge some five miles back. Due south of this island is a sand beach a mile in length, covered with large cypress. It is but thirty feet wide, backed by interminable marsh. Some rare minute fossil shells were found here. A bay two miles deep is found south of this point, and thence the shore trends south-east. The course from point to point is due east. There are three projecting points from the main marsh, of this, the southern end of Lake Okee-chobee, covered with a vegetation strikingly different from that of the western and northern shores. It is here that the water filters through the grassy, marshy rim to the south. The low custard apple is the only tree here. Joint-grass and lilies are thickly filled in, the whole forming a mass easily permeated by the water. The lake terminates in three great bays, from five to six miles in width, curving easterly. If there are any streams leading out of them, they are not navigable, or even discernible. Nearly opposite the island before mentioned, Fish Eating creek comes in—a large creek in some places, but not navigable for our boat. Fort

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Centre, a military post in the last Indian war, was six miles from the lake upon this creek.

After this succession of bays and marshy points the shore suddenly turns northward, and vegetation assumes a different appearance. Cypress appear here and there, and a thick sprinkling of ash and palmetto. About four miles from the commencement of the northward dip, the shore turns north-east. Three miles south of this curve is a group of three islands, about two miles in length. They curve from south to north-east, and are nearly submerged, only covered with ash, apparently, and low willows. At this curve in the main shore ends the Everglades, and commences a cypress belt that extends north-east for thirty miles. The beach here is composed of disintegrated shells, and there are many species of salt-water shells thrown upon the shore. Fragments of coquina, also, were found here. There were tracks of coons and rabbits here, the first seen since leaving the north-west shore. Moccasin snakes were unusually plentiful, and unwound themselves from nearly every fallen tree. A belt of cypress, in which is mingled all the trees mentioned as occurring in the hammocks of the north-west shore, backs this white shell beach, the only breaks in which, to within two miles of the Kissimmee, are, first a deep sound, fifteen miles south-east of the Kissimmee, and a bay two miles from that river. This latter bay so much resembles that of the Kissimmee that it will puzzle one unless he examines it thoroughly. Taylor's creek, and another smaller, empty into the lake within ten miles of the Kissimmee, but their channels are so choked with water-lettuce and lilies that an experienced eye is required to discern them.

The lake is about forty miles long, by twenty-five in

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width. In length, the greatest from the mouth of the Kissimmee south-east; in breadth, near the centre. It is very shallow, and grass shoals extend for miles into the lake. Nowhere did we find a greater depth than twelve feet. In fish Okeechobee is deficient; such is the violence of the storms there, and such the shallowness of the lake, that it is often stirred to its very centre, and no fish of ordinary mould can survive such a stirring up. The fish-food, also, the crustacea, etc., is scarce. Alligators are not so numerous as one would expect, except in the lagoons and at the creek-mouths. Birds are not abundant, with the exception of the fish-hawk, crying-birds, snake-birds, and heron. A complete list of the birds will be found in a separate chapter.

During all our voyage we saw but one man, beside our party, and the only evidence of any people ever having lived here was in the discovery of the remains of two villages, the houses sunken to the ground, and the plantations overrun with the wild growth of the swamp. This was upon the east shore, eleven miles east of the Kissimmee river. Bananas, paw-paws, sugar-cane, and guavas were growing here in wild luxuriance. These villages belonged to a portion of the Okeechobee tribe of Seminoles, now living in the Big Cypress, south-west of Lake Okeechobee.

FRED BEVERLY.

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XXV.

FLORIDA TRAVEL.

THE St. Johns river is the great attraction for all tourists; but those who wish to examine a wild and weird stream, should take one of Colonel Hart's steamers from Pilatka and ascend the Ochlawaha; and *en route* visit that great natural curiosity, Silver Spring. Owing to the character of the navigation, the boats present an unpretending exterior; but the accommodations and table can be recommended, more especially when we take into consideration the low price of passage.

A large number of steam-boats ply on the St. Johns river, and the tourist will find comfortable state-rooms and well supplied tables. But visitors to Florida must remember that the stewards of the boats cannot visit Fulton Market and buy in a stock of luxuries. When we take everything into consideration, we must congratulate the owners of steamboats in the State for the manner in which they cater for their passengers.

Jacksonville, the great objective point, is well supplied with hotels, and innumerable private boarding houses. At Magnolia, Hibernia, Green Cove Spring, Pilatka, Mellonville, and Enterprise, excellent hotels will be found. For the information of intending tourists

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and sportsmen we will furnish rates to all important landings on the St. Johns river.

Fare to all landings between Jacksonville and Green Cove Spring	$1 00
Fare to all landings above Green Cove Spring to Pilatka	2 00
Meals Extra.	
Jacksonville to San Mateo	4 00
" " Welaka	5 00
" " Lake George Landing	6 00
" " Volusea	7 00
" " Blue Spring	8 00
" " Enterprise and Mellonville	9 00
" " Lake Harris	12 00
" " Salt Lake	14 00
State-room and meals included in fare to all points beyond Pilatka.	
Charge for row boats to Enterprise	$3 to 6
" " " Salt Lake	8

From Salt Lake, passengers can secure transportation to Indian river for about $5. Freight one-half cent per pound. A small steamer has been placed on Indian river, but as yet nothing definite has been determined regarding fare or time of departure. So much has already been written about Indian river as an attractive point for sportsmen that I shall refrain from adding my mite.

New Smyrna, on the Halifax river, can be reached from Enterprise, but as Colonel Alden has so thoroughly written up the locality in the columns of the public press, we shall refrain from commenting upon its climate, bathing, and piscatorial attractions. But we are compelled to state that sportsmen will find the Colonel approachable, and ever ready to furnish information regarding his section.

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St. Augustine can be reached from Tocoi by railroad. The road is fourteen miles in length and the charge for passage $2.50. The price may seem exorbitant, but travellers must remember that travel is limited, and that the road must earn sufficient in three months to run it for twelve. Excellent hotel accommodations will be found in St. Augustine, and in addition, the tourist can choose between a number of private boarding houses.

If any adventurous sporting reader wishes to indulge in an agreeable and romantic trip, we would advise him to obtain a light flat-bottomed boat, eighteen to twenty feet long, five feet beam, with centre-board and sprit sail. Forward it to Jacksonville by sailing vessel or steamer; from Jacksonville to Mellonville by steamboat. Transport boat from Mellonville to Lake Hoptaliga by wagon, a distance of about thirty-five miles, at an expense of $25. From the lake descend the Kissimmee river to Lake Okeechobee, a distance of about one hundred and sixty miles. The river is bounded by extensive prairies, and the hunter can indulge in deer shooting to his satisfaction. Ducks and 'gators exist in immense quantities, and bass (trout) fishing will be found to be excellent. Owing to the prevalence of easterly winds, the open nature of the country and the rapid current, Okeechobee can be reached in three days from Hoptaliga.

From the mouth of the Kissimmee to the mouth of Fish Eating creek is a distance of about thirty miles. But to find the entrance to the latter stream is the rub. Three parties have descended the Kissimmee, and searched for the mouth of the creek, but failed to find it. I propose entering it before next spring, from the lake, and if I succeed, I will erect a pole at its mouth, surmounted with a tin can. The best directions I can

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furnish to parties desirous of entering the creek are as follows :

From the mouth of the Kissimmee river to Fish Eating creek the course of the lake shore is south-west by west, about thirty miles ; and from the mouth of the creek the trend of the shore is south-south-east. The bearings of the lake shore will guide the wanderer in finding the entrance of the creek. North of the creek less than one mile, a very large cypress will be noticed in the lake, about six hundred feet from the shore. Owing to the prevalence of easterly winds, the mouth of the creek will probably be found obstructed by floating lettuce, but the channel can be discovered by keeping near the shore and sounding with a pole. To escape the difficulties attending the navigation of the creek (for two and a half miles, beginning at the lake), in consequence of the presence of lettuce, we would advise parties to take to the marsh opposite the large cypress, and pursue south-west by west course, which will land them in the creek above the obstruction ; in an ordinary state of water a boat can be pushed through the saw-grass and lily-pads.

Proceeding up the creek about five miles, an immense mound will be noticed on the left bank. This has not been opened to any extent, and if archæologically inclined the tourist may amuse himself. Six miles above the mound a ford will be discovered, and this point is named New Fort Centre. By proceeding a few miles above the crossing, the sportsman could camp on the banks of the creek under the protecting branches of some huge live-oak, and indulge in the best deer and turkey shooting in the United States. The creek is noted for its numbers of large trout (bass).

The question of how to reach the Caloosahatchie will

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be asked. The pedestrian of the party must provide himself with a bottle of water, and some provisions, and take the old military road at the ford and follow it for twelve miles in a south-west direction, when Mr. Carlton's residence will be discovered. I arranged with Mr. Carlton to transport boat and traps for any party from the creek to Fort Thompson, at the head of navigation, on the Caloosahatchie. The price agreed upon with Mr. Carlton, for self, wagon, and team, was $3 per day. Going to and returning from the creek would require two days, and entail an expense of $6. I engaged Mr. Carlton to carry me to Fish Eating creek, and formed a very favorable opinion of him.

At the rapids, large trout and cavalli, weighing three to four pounds, can be captured. As a general rule, a number of Indians will be found in camp at the fort, and superior buckskins can be purchased from them for $1 per skin. The descent of the Caloosahatchie a distance of about 110 miles will be found to be an enjoyable trip. When Punta Rassa is reached, the wanderer may do up Charlotte Harbor, or take the steamer Valley City on Tuesday and reach Cedar Keys on Thursday.

The trip from Jacksonville, and return via Punta Rassa and Cedar Keys, a distance of about 1,000 miles could be made in a limited period and at a trifling expense. We are under the impression that we could do it up in the time indicated below: 2 days to Mellonville; 2 days to Hoptaliga; 4 days to Okeechobee; 2 days to Fish Eating creek; 1 day to Fort Centre; 3 days to be occupied in transporting boat to Fort Thompson; 4 days from Fort T. to Punta Rassa; 2 days from Punta Rassa to Cedar Keys; 1 day from Cedar Keys to Jacksonville; or twenty-one days for the round trip.

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I may remark that boats can be purchased in Jacksonville; but, as they are generally built of yellow pine, they are heavy and apt to leak. Before leaving Jacksonville, or Mellonville, a party should provide themselves with a pushing pole sixteen feet long.

It seems strange that Florida is almost the oldest settled portion of the United States, and up to the present time no person has left the Atlantic coast and reached the Gulf through the medium of a boat, via St. Johns, Kissimmee, Okeechobee, and Caloosahatchie, and for the obvious reason that no one has been able to find the mouth of Fish Eating creek. If I can find the right kind of a companion, I will make the attempt in December or January. I have recently received one of Bond's sectional boats, sixteen feet long, and propose testing its applicability for the trip. South-west Florida is a sportsman's paradise, and truly worth visiting. Frosts are unknown, rain seldom falls during the winter months, the days are not uncomfortably warm, and the health is unexceptionable.

"AL FRESCO."

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XXVI.

HOMOSASSA—TALLAHASSEE.

SINCE my last communication was mailed, I have received a letter from E. J. Harris, Esq., of Ocala, in answer to one of mine; and I shall copy portions of it for the benefit of intending tourists:

"Yours of the 4th was received the other day, relative to the route and conveyances to Homosassa. Alfred Davis, a well-to-do colored man, who keeps horses and vehicles to hire, agreed with me at the following prices: For carrying one person and his baggage from Ocala to Homosassa, $10. For two persons, at the same time, $12; or $6 each. For three persons or more, at the same time, $5 each. His vehicles consist of one hack with cover, and one one-horse buggy. He says that he will have another two-horse hack soon. Davis will pay the ferriage over the Withlacoochee river, and all expenses of driver and team.

"The distance is somewhere about forty-six miles; that is to the landing on Mr. Yulee's old plantation. The road, for Florida, is neither good nor bad, but what you would call middling; a part of it over sand-hills. But by taking an early start, the trip may be made in a day, which Davis proposes to do. I think the price reasonable enough, considering the distance. There will be other horses and vehicles to hire. I also will keep, the

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coming season, horses and hacks chiefly to run between this (Ocala) and Silver Spring, and convey persons free of cost, that may want to stop at my house. I have a house at Silver Spring, and will have it fitted up in good style by January, to run in connection with my hotel in Ocala."

In addition to the remarks of Mr. Harris, I may state that the old plantation on the Homosassa river to which he refers is distant from Jones' residence about two miles. I will communicate with J., and he will make arrangements for the transportation of guests on their arrival at the end of the hack journey.

I cannot refrain from expressing an opinion with regard to Ocala, as a winter resort for invalids. The land is high, and the air is pure and dry. Last fall I advised two ladies to winter there—one was suffering from tuberculosis of the left lung; and the other from neuralgia and general debility. In both cases, relief was obtained. Mr. Harris as well as his better half, are kindness itself. The hotel is large, but old-fashioned; and, if he is justified, Mr. Harris will refurnish it. The accommodations are fair; and the table very good for an inland locality. The terms of board are about $25 per month. Ocala boasts of a telegraph station, and a mail four times weekly. The population numbers about four hundred. The great objection to the place, is the existence of fleas; and we would recommend intending visitors to supply themselves with *quantum suff.* of insect powder. The other day, I was favored with a visit from one of the city fathers of Ocala; and advised him to secure the passage of an ordinance by the council, removing hogs from the city limits; as these animals are to a great extent the cause of fleas. He assured me that he

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would use his efforts to accomplish the desired end. As a winter residence for the consumptive, we have no hesitation in recommending Ocala. For the sportsman it possesses no attractions.

As a resort for sportsmen, the fine country around Tallahassee has been overlooked. Before the war, a large area was under cultivation in cotton, and, as a consequence, old fields surround the city in every direction, and these literally swarm with quail. In fact, I question if they can be found as plentiful in any other section of the United States. East of Tallahassee is Lake Lafayette, six miles in length; and four miles north of the city Lake Jackson, seventeen miles long. During the winter months these lake swarm with duck and brant, and the gunnist may enjoy himself until surfeited. To the angler Lake Jackson presents many attractions, as it is well stocked with some of the largest bass and bream to be found in the State.

In order that I might supply the reader with valuable information, I addressed my friend F. B. Papy, Esq., of the J. P. & M. R. R., and in reply received the following:

"TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA, Sept. 16, 1875.

"DEAR SIR: Your favor of the 7th, to Mr. F. B. Papy, to hand; he is now absent north, but I hope the information I may give will serve you.

"Q. At what season does brant and duck shooting exist in perfection? A. From middle of November to middle of March.

"Q. Have you any woodcock in your section during the winter? A. Very few.

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"Q. Can comfortable board be obtained at Lake Jackson? A. Country board.

"Q. Can comfortable board be obtained where quail are plentiful; and terms? A. Yes; terms, $8 to $10 per week.

"Q. What are the terms for board in your city? A. Hotel, $3.50 per diem; private board, $8 to $12.50 per week.

"Q. Can boats be obtained at Lake Jackson? A. Yes.

"Arrangements are in progress as regards excursion tickets to Tallahassee. Will be happy to give any information in my power, as well as any of the citizens of the vicinity. Favorable excursion rates will be effected between Jacksonville and Middle Florida during the season, which will be announced in due time.

"Very truly yours,

"Wm. E. Ames,

"For F. B. Papy."

Tallahassee is easily reached from Jacksonville, and is well worth visiting by the sportsman. Upon arrival at depot, if Mr. Papy is interviewed he will furnish all necessary information. He is a capital shot, an ardent sportsman, and his statements can be relied upon. Tallahassee is rather an uncomfortable locality for carpet-baggers and scallawags, but the gentlemanly sportsman will meet with a true southern welcome from all; and will be treated with the utmost kindness and courtesy. I am a Northern man, and speak from experience. Southerners have been misrepresented by bigoted and narrow-minded Northerners who have visited the State, and false impressions have been produced. A few

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prejudiced persons have visited the South, and have taken advantage of every opportunity to ventilate their crotchety and angular points. They have received the cold shoulder, and in their correspondence have resorted to misrepresentations. I have wandered around the world, and in the United States from the head of Lake Superior to the Gulf of Mexico; and during my many wanderings in various portions of Florida, I have invariably been treated with kindness, courtesy, and hospitality—in fact, I have never met with the same kind and courteous treatment anywhere else. To the sportsman unacquainted with Florida I will simply say, be courteous and reasonable, and a true southern welcome, and the most unbounded hospitality, will be extended everywhere and by all.

"Al Fresco."

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XXVII.

SOUTH-WEST FLORIDA.

1.—Fernandina to Cedar Keys.

THIS is the 25th of February. On the 5th of last December, I left New York on the steamer Gulf Stream for Charleston, in company with Frank and Harry, to whom I shall refer in the future. My boat (the Spray), with necessaries for the trip, was shipped at Philadelphia for Savannah. On the night of the 7th, Hatteras favored us with *quantum suff.* of wind and a cross sea without any foot. Although an old sea-dog, I was forced to succumb to the remedial measures of old Nep. After many voyages we fancy that we are competent to express an opinion regarding the sea-going qualities of steamships and sailing vessels, and have no hesitation in stating that the Gulf Stream is remarkable for many good qualities in a heavy sea. We reached Charleston on the 8th, at nine P. M., and at eleven P. M. found ourselves in one of the comfortable state-rooms of the good steamer Dictator, *en route* for Savannah. The latter place we reached on the 9th, at six A. M., and at twelve M. left for Fernandina, and arrived at the latter place at

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one A. M. on the 10th, where we landed the Spray and her crew.

We have visited Florida on many occasions, and have tested the sea-going qualities of the Dictator and City Point, plying between Charleston, Savannah, Fernandina, Jacksonville, and Pilatka, and can unhesitatingly recommend them to the travelling public. The traveller who patronizes one of these boats will find large and pleasantly furnished forward and after cabins, large state-rooms, good beds, clean linen, and excellent table, and last, though not least, efficient, courteous, and attentive officers and servants. To those who are anxious to escape the buffetings of old mother ocean, we would say, take a sleeping car on the A. & G. R. R. from Savannah, and Jacksonville can be reached in a pleasant manner. Upon reaching Savannah the traveller will find the Lizzie Baker advertised to take the inside route to Florida. The statement is only true to a certain extent, as the Lizzie B. is compelled to take the outside route from Fernandina Harbor to the river St. John, which is the most dangerous portion of the route, and as the Lizzie B. is not as well adapted to cross the St. Johns bar or to contend with heavy seas as the Dictator or City Point, we unhesitatingly advise the tourist to take passage on one of the latter.

Having shipped our future home, the Spray, on a flat car, we left Fernandina on the morning of Friday the 11th, and at five P. M. found ourselves at Cedar Keys. We travelled over this road in February, 1873, and compliment the management upon the improved condition of the road bed and motive power. One great drawback to Cedar Keys is the absence of a good hotel, and we are satisfied that a well-conducted house, with a good table

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and properly cooked food, would induce many tourists to visit this locality. Fishing, hunting, and shooting in the neighborhood are good; — the bathing excellent, and the climate superior to that of Jacksonville. It seems to us that parties interested in the railroad would materially benefit themselves by erecting a first-class hotel at Cedar Keys.

We expected to leave Cedar Keys for Manatee on the 12th, by the steamer Emilie, but owing to the detention of the steamer Clyde, plying between New Orleans, Cedar Keys, and Havana, our departure was delayed until the 15th. To while away the dull hours, we proposed engaging in piscatorial pursuits, but were informed that "it was too warm for sea trout to bite." Placing no dependence in the statement of the local authorities, I was resolved to test the matter, and secured several hundred minnows and proceeded to the railroad dock. With live bait we caught sea trout (weak fish) ranging from two to six pounds, as fast as we could bait and land them. On many occasions we landed a brace weighing from four to five pounds each. The first day we filled a flour barrel, and the second we abandoned the sport when we had captured 120 pounds. Around the dock sea-bass and porgies can be caught with cut bait, and sheepshead with fiddlers. On the points and about the reefs a few miles from town, superior red and grouper fishing can be obtained at Cedar Keys. The sportsman will find unbounded hospitality, and courteous attention on the part of the inhabitants. Invitations to join hunting and fishing expeditions were showered upon us, but we were forced to decline. From this point the tourist may take a steamship to New Orleans, Tampa, Punta Rassa, Key West, or Havana. For the purpose

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of cruising along the coast, or general sporting purposes, suitable boats with experienced sailing masters can be engaged at from four to six dollars per day. Persons desiring information, wishing to secure boats, or the services of sailing masters, may address Messrs. Willard & Raoux, or the post-master, J. F. Jackson. These gentlemen would only be too happy to furnish any information required, as well as assist sportsmen in every way upon their arrival. If these gentlemen are called upon by the disciples of the rod and gun, we will guarantee them a hearty welcome, and any assistance required. At this point we were introduced to a gentleman named Alfred E. Jones, residing at Homosassa, who invited us to spend a fortnight at his residence. In another communication we have refered to his hospitality and the attractions of his locality.

At Cedar Keys we instituted numerous inquiries regarding Bronson, the county seat of Levy county, distant thirty miles from Cedar Keys, on the line of railroad to Fernandina. Fare from New York to Bronson, by Hermon Gelpcke's line (via Fernandina), $25. In the neighborhood of Bronson deer are plenty; also turkeys, brant, duck, and quail can be found in abundance. Chunky Pond is distant from the village about two miles; it is about two miles long and one wide, connecting with a number of smaller ponds which extend for a distance of about nine miles. These ponds contain bream and trout (bass) in endless numbers—the latter ranging from one to fifteen pounds. Persons visiting, or desirous of visiting Bronson, would do well to call upon or communicate with Mr. G. Levett, the county clerk. The hotel at Bronson can accommodate fifteen visitors; board $7 per week. Dr. Johnson would accommodate

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two or three, and Mr. Levett, the same number; board $5 per week. As a guide to the best fishing points, the visitor can secure the services of James Pruden, and for deer and turkey hunting, J. R. Tunlon or W. B. Kinsey.

We spent several days very pleasantly at Cedar Keys and made numerous acquaintances, and in concluding I cannot refrain from referring to a local institution. One evening, at nine P. M. Messrs. Willard & Raoux invited us to visit the rear of their store, where we found a portion of the shell of a boiler, supported by brick piers; under the boiler was a large fire, and on the top thereof two barrels of Cedar Keys oysters. As the heat opened the oysters the crew of the Spray went for them, and I must positively decline mentioning what proportion of the aforesaid oysters the Sprayites deposited beneath their belts.

2.—Manatee, Sarasota, and Gasparilla.

We left Cedar Keys Tuesday evening, on steamer Emilie, Captain Lefferts, and arrived at Manatee on the morning of Wednesday the 16th. This vessel makes weekly trips between Cedar Keys, Manatee, Tampa, Punta Rassa, and Key West. Tourists and sportsmen will find this steamer an excellent and comfortable sea-boat, and her commander an old and experienced sailor; one who is ever attentive to make his passengers comfortable. In referring to the able and oblig-

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ing captain, we must not neglect mentioning the efficient, courteous, and gentlemanly purser. To those who wish to enjoy a balmy atmosphere, an equable and salubrious climate, and a sea voyage over a calm ocean, we would say, take an excursion ticket on the Emilie from Cedar Keys to Key West and return.

We are surprised that Mr. Clyde, owner of the Galveston line of steamships touching at Key West, and Mr. J. K. Roberts of the South-west Florida Coast line, do not arrange with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, to issue excursion tickets, good for the round trip. If this arrangement could be effected, tourists could leave New York by steamer during the pleasant autumnal weather and lay over at Key West or intermediate points before reaching the grand objective point of Florida—the city of Jacksonville. The return trip to the North could be made by rail, thereby avoiding the unpleasant storms that prevail on the Atlantic coast during February and March. This arrangement would enable invalids to enjoy the superior climate, and sportsmen to participate in the unrivalled fishing and shooting of the south-west coast at a reasonable outlay of time and money. To popularize the route, we are convinced that it would pay interested parties to publish, for the benefit of tourists and sportsmen, a small guide descriptive of the route, climate, best points for fishing and shooting, where to obtain guides and boats, necessaries for outfits, etc. We have long maintained that the south-west coast needs but to have its advantages known to be appreciated.

We launched our future home, the Spray, at Manatee, and for the benefit of others we shall describe the boat and outfit. Possessing a limited knowledge of the

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coast, we were convinced that a boat of an ordinary yacht model was not adapted to our wants, as she would draw too much water for the navigation of creeks, bayous and shallow rivers, and ground on the mud flats and oyster bars so extensively distributed in all the bays of the coast. A flat-bottomed or bateau-modelled boat was not adapted to our wants, as she would prove unsuitable for outside work, and would not work well to windward. Before purchasing, we examined a number of boats in New York and Philadelphia, but failed to find what we required. Continuing our search, we visited Burlington, New Jersey, and found the Spray for sale ; and she was purchased. Having traversed nearly three degrees of latitude, and two and three-quarters of longitude in the Spray, we are in a position to form an opinion, and would unhesitatingly advise intending tourists to secure a boat of similar model, as we found her in every way adapted to a boat journey on the south-west coast. Length of Spray, twenty-one feet ; beam, seven feet ; cat rigged ; centre-board ; form of bottom, midway between bateau and yacht ; deep scag forward ; decked over forward seven feet ; movable cabin, six feet six inches. This form of hull supplies room for stowage, light draught of water ; rows well ; is remarkably stiff ; and dry and comfortable in a sea-way.

Outfit, two pairs of oars ; canvas awning to stretch over boom, and fasten to screw eyes in each quarter (thus protecting after part of boat), anchor and cable, palm, needles and sail twine, lantern, lampwick, lard oil, five-gallon water-keg, bucket, broom, spade, axe, saw, screw-driver, gimlet, hammer, oyster knife, compass, binocular glass, small stove, frying pan, coffee-pot, tin stew-pan, tin cups and plates, knives and forks, nails, screws, screw

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eyes, tinned 10-oz. tacks, whetstone, matches in tin boxes, soap, towels, combs, hair and tooth brushes, pens, paper, ink; postage stamps, envelopes, two feed chests, sugar in round wooden boxes with lids, pickles, cheese, pepper, salt, ten pounds best Java coffee in tin box, six cans condensed milk, forty-eight pounds best lard in eight-pound tin cans, ninety-four pounds best pilot bread, fifty pounds best breakfast bacon, two hams, two boxes red herrings, old boots, shoes, slippers, and clothes, blankets, with *quantum suff.* of old calico and newspapers, powder, shot, wads, caps, cartridges, gun-cleaning apparatus, Colton's and Drew's maps of Florida, one Winchester and Remington rifle, one breech and two muzzle-loading guns, hunting knives, fishing rods and tackle; three pounds arsenic in tin box; diarrhœa mixture, lead and opium pills for dysentery, purgative pills, and adhesive and court plaster, in tin cans; tobacco, pipes, one bottle of brandy, and one of apple-jack. Verily, a long list of plunder, but everything absolutely necessary for such an expedition.

Our numerous necessaries were stowed, and we visited a neighboring saw-mill to secure spring mattresses. The proprietor sawed us four boards five-eighths of an inch thick, and three pieces one inch thick and four inches wide. To arrange our sleeping apartment at night, we placed the stove in the cock-pit; the 1x4 pieces athwart ship, and the boards forward and aft. At night we anchored the Spray as far as possible from land, placed the soft side of the boards uppermost; arranged our blankets; secured our awning, and slept as only men can sleep, when inhaling the balmy and invigorating atmosphere of South-west Florida.

Manatee is a pleasant village of several hundred in-

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habitants, situated on the Manatee river, eight miles from its mouth. At this place, the tourist will find two or three boarding houses, where fair accommodations can be obtained for two dollars per day, or forty dollars per month. This place offers to the invalid a pleasant winter climate, but to the sportsman few attractions. On Saturday, the 19th, we hoisted sail and bade adieu to Manatee. Leaving the mouth of the river we took a westerly course for the striped buoy in Tampa Bay, and from buoy, a south-west course to the tripod on Anna Maria Key, from a point near the tripod a south-east course to Palmasota Point, the entrance to Sarasota Bay. Between these points the channel was filled with mullet, and hundreds of large sharks were revelling in the superabundant supply of delicious food.

Entering Sarasota Bay, we were greeted with a south-easter with some sea, but the Spray worked admirably, and proved herself an excellent sea-boat. Night approaching, we made a harbor under the lee of a long sand-bar, and after cooking our supper we laid our weary limbs on our spring beds. At ten P. M. the wind hauled, and we found our position an uncomfortable one, compelling us to hoist anchor and seek a better harbor. The night being dark, I handled the lead, and stationed Harry at the helm. With the lead we kept in the channel, and made tracks for the southern end of Sarasota Bay. At eleven P. M. we sighted two passes in the distance, one of which we had reason to believe would carry us to sea, and the other into Little Sarasota Bay. We objected to a night adventure on the Gulf, with an uncomfortable sea running, and as we had been informed that the entrance into Little Sarasota Bay was blocked up with dangerous coon oyster reefs, except a narrow boat chan-

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nel, we deemed it best to seek an anchorage, and having found shelter from the waves under the lee of an extensive grassy flat, we came to an anchor.

Next morning we took a survey of the surroundings, and found that we had anchored at the south end of Great Sarasota Bay. We noticed a house near the beach, made a landing, and were gratified to find that the residents were from Brooklyn, New York, and named Bennett. Being unacquainted with the coast farther south, and aware of the fact that a trip of thirty-eight miles to sea was before us, we deemed it best to secure a pilot. Bennett Junior was acquainted with the coast, and offered to pilot us, but could not leave until Bennett Senior returned from Manatee with their boat. The elder Bennett returned on Monday night, and we arranged for an early start on Tuesday morning. Sailing about three miles across the bay, we entered Sarasota Pass, a channel of about 500 feet in width, leading from the bay to the Gulf. Approaching the entrance we discovered two channels, one leading direct to the Gulf, but bounded on each side by extensive sand-bars; the other a swamp channel turning short to the south, around the north point of Casey's Key, and protected seaward by an extensive sand-bar. We chose the latter, and soon found ourselves on the Gulf, with a fair wind.

A reference to Drew's and Colton's maps will lead the intending tourist to believe that he will find five available passes between Little Sarasota and Little Gasparilla inlets. But these maps are unreliable as far as the south-west coast is concerned. If we had relied upon these maps, and attempted this portion of the coast without a pilot, we would have experienced disappointment, if not something worse. The distance between the

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passes referred to is thirty-eight miles. At noon the wind died away, and we were compelled to resort to an ashen breeze. Wednesday morning at daylight, we sighted Little Gasparilla Pass. At low tide the pass is about 150 feet wide, with two entrances, one leading in from the south, and the other a swash channel which hugs the north point. We chose the latter, and at sunrise we anchored inside the pass, discharged the pilot, and captured a mess of sheepshead for breakfast. After breakfast we got under weigh for our objective point, Lake Okeechobee. Possessing no knowledge of the route to be traversed, and anticipating difficulties during the journey, we resolved upon pushing ahead, and on our return make a careful examination of bays, rivers, and keys.

From Little Gasparilla to Great Gasparilla passes, the distance is about two and a quarter miles. To keep in the channel the island must be kept close aboard. When Great Gasparilla Pass opens, the traveller must follow the channel as though he intended proceeding to sea, and at the southern point of Little Gasparilla Key he will sight a channel tending in an east-south-east course, which must be followed to clear a long and extensive sand-bar, extending from the northerly point of Great Gasparilla Key. Rounding the point of the sand-bar, a channel with six to nine feet of water will be found, leading in a north-easterly direction, which must be followed. Three miles from the pass (Great Gasparilla), an island will be approached, and this must be left about 100 yards to port. From this island a course south by east must be steered to within 200 yards of the inner portion of northern point of Lacosta Island. Having crossed Boca Grande entrance, and reached the point

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referred to, some fishermen's palmetto huts will be sighted, where fresh water can be obtained, and a safe harbor found.

Boca Grande entrance is nearly a mile wide, with deep water and a rapid tidal current. If a strong southerly wind is blowing against an ebb tide, a troublesome sea will be encountered at this entrance, and the tourist must govern his movements accordingly. Along this coast the tides differ from those of our Northern States. Instead of two tides in the twenty-four hours, but one flood and one ebb will be found. At this point I may remark, that the bays north of Tampa are remarkable for extensive mud and grassy flats, and coon oyster bars, rendering navigation difficult to the uninitiated. The water in all the bays is very clear, and if too much sea is not running the tourist can pick his way through the intricate channels by observing the color of the water. A day's experience in one of these bays, with a few experiments in stepping overboard and pushing his boat off oyster bars and mud flats, will educate him sufficiently to avoide the necessity of the frequent utterance of language not adapted to ears polite.

3.—Among the Keys.

In my last communication I referred to a spade as a portion of our outfit, and mentioned the fact that a supply of fresh water could be obtained at the fish ranch on the northern end of Lacosta Island. To the tourist, a supply of fresh water is indispensable, and if his boat is small the quantity carried must be limited, and how to obtain a supply is an important matter. Nearly

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all the islands and keys are supplied with fresh water, and the tourist will be informed that this indispensable fluid "can be obtained almost anywhere on the islands or keys by digging a hole near the beach." Water of fair quality can be obtained on most of the islands and keys, if the proper site is selected for the well. In digging for water, the experienced invariably select a locality where there are no mangrove bushes, for wherever this growth is found, water will be impregnated with salt. On the bay side of most of the islands and main land a low-growing bush or tree will be found, with circular shaped leaves four inches wide, and the searcher for fresh water should prospect near this growth, as fresh water will generally be found near the surface. We dug a well on the northern end of Little Gasparilla, forty feet from the beach, and curbed it with an empty barrel we picked up on the beach. From half flood until half ebb the water was very salt, but at low tide we found it palatable. After finishing our well, we explored the island, and found about its centre a lagoon several hundred yards in length, containing excellent water.

From the fish ranch on the eastern end of Lacosta Island, we started across, south-east by south three miles, and found ourselves abreast of the northern end of Useppa Island. At six P. M. we landed on the eastern side of the island, at the foot of a large shell mound. To the south of the large mound we found two wells of excellent water, and on the north side some very large figs, with a full supply of superior limes. Searching farther we discovered a luxurious banana patch, but the fruit was not ripe. The island is over one mile in length and one-third of a mile in width at the widest

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point. In the centre of this island will be found several large shell mounds, the largest about sixty feet high. The southern extremity of the island is covered with live-oak and mangrove trees. From the mounds to the northern end, the island is clothed with a luxuriant growth of live-oak and palms, and is the highest land to be found on any of the coast islands south of Cedar Keys. In front of the mounds deep water will be found within a few yards of the shore. This island has been the home of a couple for several years, but as the female part of the population deemed it proper to elope with a fisherman, the masculine portion became guilty of arson, and retired from the beautiful island of Useppa, leaving behind him some bricks, charcoal, and the remains of a cooking-stove.

This island is distant two miles from the Gulf, from which it is separated and protected by Lacosta Island; distance to the main land, fifteen miles. Owing to its climatic advantages, elevation of the land, and protected situation, it is the most eligible site for a sanitarium in the South. Frost is unknown, and before the chilly north-west wind can reach the island, it becomes temperate by crossing the warm waters of the harbor for a distance of twenty miles. In this section the much-to-be-dreaded north-easters of the coast do not bring rain, and have none of that searching, chilly nature that characterizes them on the Atlantic side. Useppa is truly the winter home for the invalid suffering from pulmonary disease—excelling in climatic advantages Bermuda, Nice, or Madeira. We predict that the day is not far distant when a large hotel will grace the shell mound on this island, and invalids in hundreds will inhale a life-restoring atmosphere unequalled by that of any part

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of the world. The winter season in this section is remarkable for the small amount of rain and the equable temperature. At Punta Rassa, twenty miles north of Useppa, at a much less favored portion, the highest range of the thermometer for the years of '72, '73, and '74, was 95 degrees, and the lowest 40 degrees. The observers stationed at Punta Rassa favored me with the range of the thermometer for the year 1874, and I shall merely give the highest and lowest ranges for the various months :

	Highest.	Lowest.
January	79	42
February	84	50
March	85	55
April	87	55
May	90	59
June	91	70
July	91	70
August	91	70
September	91	67
October	85	64
November	82	50
December	80	49

We spent several weeks at Charlotte Harbor and the Caloosahatchie river, and did not see a drop of rain during that period; and found the climate invigorating and delightful. This section of the State is not affected by those sudden transitions of temperature which are so unpleasant farther north, or on the Atlantic coast. For the sportsman, Useppa offers many attractions, as the neighboring oyster reefs and low islands are frequented by countless numbers of snipe; the adjoining islands are well stocked with deer, and the waters of the bay teem

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with fish of a superior quality. On our return we called at this island to secure a supply of water. I engaged in capturing a mess of fish, and in a short time, with fiddlers for bait, landed the following: cavalli, sheepshead, red and black grouper, porgy, sea-bass, angel-fish, and catfish.

Soon after our arrival at Useppa, a fishing schooner, named the Breaker, came to an anchor, and we boarded her, as we fancied we might patch up some information. The captain was named William Smart, and resided at Key West. He had been navigating the south-west coast for twenty-seven years, and appeared thoroughly posted with regard to every island, key, channel, pass, bay, creek, river, and shoal on the coast. During the survey of Charlotte Harbor he had been engaged in the capacity of pilot, and during the last Indian war he was employed in the Quartermaster's Department. He informed me that he owned a fast-sailing sloop of five tons measurement, in every way adapted to the navigation of the south-west coast. He stated that he would fit her up, so as to comfortably accommodate a party of six sportsmen; supply stove and cooking utensils, and two Mystic-built skiffs. He and his son (an intelligent youth of sixteen) would sail the craft, cook, and render themselves generally useful. For all this fit-out and services, the captain would charge four dollars per day. One great recommendation, in my estimation, is the fact that Captain Smart is a teetotaller. A party of four or six could charter this craft, take steamer at New York, and on arrival at Key West take possession. The tourist could visit the keys, islands, bays, capes, rivers, creeks, harbors, passes, and mainland —in fact all the more important hunting and fishing

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points between Key West and Cedar Keys—when the party could take the cars for home. Having had a limited experience of climate and hunting and fishing on the south-west coast, I wish to continue it, and would only be too happy to join from three to five congenial spirits, in the fall of 1875, to charter the sloop referred to, and do up in a thorough manner sections that I have merely prospected, and others that I have not visited.

Leaving the fishing ranch on the north end of La-costa Island, and steering a course north-east by east eight miles, a deep bay, without islands, shoals, or mud-banks, will open up. From this point a course north by west twelve miles will reveal the broad entrance to Peas creek, which stream can be ascended for eighty miles. Reliable parties, who have visited and who reside upon this stream, have assured me that its banks present a fine field for deer and turkey hunting. Crossing the head of the bay, six miles in a westerly direction from Peas creek, the Myokka river will open up. From statements received, I have reason to believe that the Myokka is the home of the alligator, the place where the big fellows live, exist, and have their being. The limited time at our disposal would not admit of our visiting these attractive streams, but we hope at some future time to examine them and perforate a few of those gigantic saurians.

Leaving Useppa, a course south-east by east must be steered until the south-west portion of Pine Island is abeam and distant one mile, then east by north until Punta Rassa bears north by east three-quarters of a mile. From this point a northerly course will bring the dock at the telegraph station. Leaving Useppa four miles astern, we sighted a small "coon oyster" island. It

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presented a singular appearance, and an examination with a glass revealed the fact that it was literally covered with snipe. Four shots furnished us with more than enough for an extensive snipe stew, and an examination of them revealed the fact that we had bagged six distinct species. The tide was low and the island was surrounded by an extensive mud flat mixed with broken shells. The shallow water was literally alive with sheepshead, weak-fish, red-fish, pompano, cavalli, grouper, etc. In the deeper water there roamed dozens of voracious sharks, who in pursuit of their prey would venture into the shallow waters until a portion of their bodies was exposed. Frank amused himself for over an hour in the water and mud, hunting sharks with a shot gun. They appeared to be unacquainted with man, and exhibited no fear. They were so intent upon securing a meal that they could be approached within a few feet. Desirous of reaching our goal, we reluctantly left this piscatorial paradise, and made sail for Punta Rassa, where we arrived on the evening of the 24th of December, and telegraphed to loved ones—"Compliments of the season. All well. Depart for interior to-morrow."

4.—METEOROLOGY.

PERSONS undertaking a boat cruise on the south-west coast should provide themselves with the published charts of Charlotte Harbor. These show the soundings of Boca Grande and Caloosa entrances; and San Carlos Bay to the mouth of the Caloosahatchie river. Outside of these localities the tourist will be compelled to pick his way, unless he is well supplied with

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this world's goods and can engage the services of a pilot. Occasionally an old coaster will be met with, from whom some valuable information can be obtained regarding the navigation of localities the wanderer may wish to visit—and such opportunities should be taken advantage of.

We may remark at this time that we found our outfit deficient in several important implements. This being our first boat cruise in this section, and having a large amount of plunder to stow and transport, we were somewhat excusable for leaving behind three important weapons, to wit: a harpoon, grains, and turtle peg. The two former are well known, and can be obtained in fishing-tackle stores; but as the turtle peg is seldom seen in the North I may at some future time give a description of it. In enumerating, on a former occasion, the articles composing our outfit, I neglected to mention a Spanish cast net. I purchased one before leaving the North, but found it entirely useless. It was made of cotton twine, eight feet wide, and with but six pounds of lead to sink it. For use in southern waters a net should be made of the best gilling twine, twelve to fourteen feet in diameter, and weighted with from twelve to fourteen pounds of lead; a cast net of any other description will prove useless, and had better remain in the North to decorate the window of some fishing tackle store.

Punta Rassa has been very appropriately termed the "jumping off place of all creation." At this point the tourist will find two large wooden buildings and some palmetto huts, and a large and substantial dock. The first building is a large structure resembling a warehouse, and is the residence of two operators in charge of the Inter-Colonial Ocean Telegraph wires and station at this

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point; and also of two observers representing "Old Prob." North of the telegraph building is a large wooden structure belonging to Captain Henry, and used as a post-office and lodging quarters for the employees of Capt. H., and those engaged in shipping cattle. The palmetto huts belong to a gentleman who has an extensive fishery at this point. This is the point where cattle are shipped from southern Florida to Key West and Cuba. The operators and observers at this point treated us with great courtesy and attention, and we are prompted to thus publicly express our thanks.

Finding nothing to interest us at this very uninteresting point, we left, on the morning of the 26th, for the Caloosahatchie river, and found the entrance a difficult piece of navigation. By advice we took the boat channel, and were favored with a head wind and ebb tide; a narrow, crooked channel, bounded and obstructed by mud flats and coon oyster bars. After one hour's beating we made one thousand feet, and surmounted the difficulties incident to the navigation. We ultimately reached the widest part of the river, and found it to be a grand stream, nearly equalling in size the St. Johns between Jacksonville and Orange Mills. We found the shores high, and clothed with pine timber of fair quality as far up as Fort Myers. At 6.30 we moored to the dock at the last-named place—25 miles distant from Punta Rassa. This was an important military post during the first and second Indian wars. At the termination of the late unpleasantness some malicious persons destroyed by fire all the buildings but one. At the present time the place contains a population of about 100 persons, nearly all of whom are engaged in cattle raising or herding in south-west Florida. We found the residents courteous and hospitable, and ready to oblige us in any way.

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As an evidence of the tropical character of the climate at this point I need but refer to the fact that the wanderer will find eleven cocoanut trees growing on the margin of the river and producing fruit. We see no reason why tropical fruits and plants should not be profitably cultivated on the banks of the Caloosahatchie. If we were young and disposed to make ourselves a home in a new country, we would without hesitation locate on the banks of this stream. The winters are pleasant, and the summers not uncomfortably warm. Northern people entertain the opinion that "the range of the thermometer in southern Florida must be much higher than in the North!" but this is a mistake. To illustrate this position I select at random a few statistics from Blodgett's excellent and reliable work on Climatology; and for the purpose of comparison again refer to observations at Punta Rassa for the year 1874—thereby illustrating the highest and lowest thermometric range:

LOWEST THERMOMETRIC RANGE.

PLACE.	Date.	Jan.		Feb.		March.		April.		May.		June.	
		°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°
New York City....	1822	60	1	68	10	76	22	84	24	84	34	98	58
Philadelphia.....	1856	40	5	46	2	48	5	80	24	87	40	98	48
Washington, D. C.	1855	58	17	48	3	65	16	92	28	86	35	95	38
St. Louis, Mo.....	1855	65	3	67	5	67	14	92	32	93	38	95	50
Cincinnati, Ohio..	1854	10	5	68	16	80	22	91	28	92	42	94	45
Fort Snelling, Min	1854	45	36	45	20	58	4	85	9	84	32	93	41
Key West, Fla....	1831	82	50	82	57	89	66	86	62	88	70	87	72
Key West, Fla....	1838	79	62	80	54	81	62	82	63	85	64	87	73
Key West, Fla....	1854	80	58	81	64	84	68	83	60	90	73	90	78
Punta Rassa, Fla..	1874	79	42	81	50	85	55	87	55	90	59	91	70

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HIGHEST THERMOMETRIC RANGE.

PLACE.	Date.	July.		Aug.		Sept.		Oct.		Nov.		Dec.	
		°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°	°
New York City ...	1822	100	62	94	60	89	50	86	37	71	33	63	13
Philadelphia.....	1856	98	64	90	53	90	44	78	35	75	31	61	9
Washington, D. C.	1855	95	52	90	47	90	42	72	25	72	24	63	13
St. Louis, Mo.....	1855	96	60	91	65	90	47	81	28	71	24	65	4
Cincinnati, Ohio..	1854	95	64	96	58	99	46	83	35	65	24	58	15
Fort Snelling, Min	1854	93	55	95	50	88	39	74	28	60	11	45	8
Key West, Fla....	1831	88	78	87	75	89	77	81	71	82	69	80	60
Key West, Fla....	1838	88	73	88	75	88	75	87	71	83	66	82	54
Key West, Fla....	1854	89	78	89	78	88	77	84	72	83	58	80	54
Punta Rassa, Fla.	1874	91	70	91	71	91	67	85	64	82	50	80	49

Land speculators residing at Bay Biscayne, who have axes to grind, and those who have visited the Indian river country, go into ecstasies over the superiority of the climate of the southern Atlantic coast, and spread their opinions broadcast over the land. Brinton, in his excellent work on "Florida and the South," remarks: "The highest winter temperature observed anywhere on the mainland of the United States was at Fort Dallas on the Miami river, and at New Smyrna, some miles north of it, both on the east coast of Florida. Furthermore, their range is less than anywhere else. During four years that the army officers watched the thermometer at Fort Dallas, the highest point reached by the mercury was ninety-five degrees, the lowest thirty-five degrees; a range therefore of sixty degrees in four years." The highest range of the thermometer for the last three years

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at Punta Rassa was ninety-five, and the lowest forty, a range therefore of but fifty-five degrees. From these data we are inclined to believe that the climate of the south-west coast will favorably compare with that of the Miami and Indian river sections.

In southern Florida, calm, warm, and sweltering nights, during the summer months, are unknown, but on the contrary a refreshing breeze exists, and blankets become almost a necessity. During the nights of July and August, when northern people are suffering from a calm and sultry atmosphere and praying for a refreshing breeze to enable them to sleep! the residents of southern Florida sleep soundly, and are refreshed by cooling and invigorating zephyrs wafted from old mother ocean.

During the winter months in southern Florida rains are unfrequent, but in summer, when vegetation is active, moisture demanded, and frequent rain storms desirable and required to favor vegetable growth and cool the atmosphere, such rains are of almost daily occurrence. From the time we left Sarasota Bay until we reached Clear Water Harbor on our return, we did not see a drop of rain. For the purpose of rendering our statements more clear and authoritative, we shall quote, from Blodgett's Climatology, some data showing the mean annual precipitation of rain and melted snow at a few points in the United States :

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MEAN ANNUAL PRECIPITATION OF RAIN AND MELTED SNOW.

MONTH.	STATIONS.			
	Fort Brooke, Florida.*	Fort Meyers, Florida.†	Charleston.	Philadelphia.
January...	2.20	3.90	2.33	3.00
February...	3.01	2.16	3.39	2.94
March.....	3.37	4.60	3.02	3.43
April.....	1.95	3.14	1.72	3.64
May.....	3.24	3.33	3.66	3.90
June.....	7.04	14.59	5.00	3.51
July.....	11.10	8.45	6.15	4.23
August....	10.10	8.51	7.53	4.67
September.	6.23	9.45	6.31	3.53
October,...	2.40	1.37	3.04	3.18
November.	2.00	0.96	2.23	3.36
December..	2.83	2.27	3.68	4.03
Spring....	8.56	11.07	8.60	10.97
Summer...	28.24	31.61	18.08	12.45
Autumn...	10.63	11.90	11.61	10.07
Winter....	8.04	8.33	9.40	10.06
Year.....	55.47	62.91	48.29	45.56

* Fort Brooke is at Tampa Bay, Florida.
† Fort Meyers is on the Caloosahatchie River, Florida.

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To those contemplating a charge of location, more especially if they intend engaging in the cultivation of the soil, we would urge the advisability of considering climatic conditions, as tending to health, longevity, bodily comforts, and pecuniary results. We often hear the objection urged that the climate of Florida is enervating and debilitating, and that people settling there become lazy as a sequence of climatic conditions. We admit that an excessively high thermometric range associated with a close moist atmosphere, will relax and debilitate the human system, but these conditions do not exist in south-west Florida; and the emigrant will not become indolent unless he is constitutionally lazy. The residents of the South are often referred to as wanting energy and perseverance; but when such references are made we must remember that, during the reign of King Cotton, to labor was unfashionable, and that slaves were plenty and ever ready to minister to the wants of the white, either adult or child. Cynics, who are ever ready to assail the South and Southerners, must remember that the male portion of our Northern population have been educated to some calling in early life—that labor and activity have become a second nature with them. Education has more to do with active habits than climate. We often hear ungenerous and censorious people refer to the "indolent nature of the Southern people," but if they bring into review the numbers engaged on the Confederate side during the late unpleasantness, and the results attained by a comparatively small number of half-starved and half-armed men, they will be forced to confess that laziness and indolence did not characterize the Confederate armies from '61 to '65. In the South to-day the female portion of the population have accepted the

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situation, placed their shoulders to the wheel, and industry and thrift are prominent. Cynical people, who wish to find indolence, laziness, and false pride among the female sex, need not extend their observations any further than the females of American birth in the Northern States—a portion of the world where industry and labor are considered disgraceful by a majority of those who were intended by a wise and beneficent Creator to become helpmates of man. In our many wanderings in the Southern States we have met with numerous Northern people who, after years of residence in the South were as active, industrious, and enterprising as before they left a more inhospitable climate. I am prompted to write as I, do in consequence of having daily and hourly listened to the unkind, unjust, and censorious criticisms of Northerners—persons who should extend the hand of sympathy and speak words of kindness to a suffering and struggling people. I am a Northerner, but must confess that I am disgusted with the want of Christian charity that characterizes many bigoted people of my section: "Let us have peace," and to bring about this halcyon state let us treat the Southern people as we would be treated—extend to them the hand of brotherhood, and use words of sympathy and kindness, instead of censure and words of reproach and condemnation. To those who intend visiting the South as tourists or sportsmen I would say, "Be generous, be kind, be honest, and a 'true Southern welcome' and unbounded hospitality will greet you everywhere, from the mansion to the palmetto hut."

In our Northern States we have thousands of persons who are suffering from rheumatic, pulmonary, and chronic diseases, whose health would be improved and lives prolonged, if they could be induced to settle in the

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genial climate of Florida. Independent of benefiting themselves, they would advance the interests of the tender branches clinging around the parent stem.

The old Romans used this pregnant expression: *Inimicus senilibus hyems*—"Winter, the foe of the aged." Modern research proves its correctness. An eminent statistician, calculating from nearly 55,000 cases over 60 years of age, discovered the startling fact that the deaths in January were within a fraction twice as many as in July. Such a statement reminds us of the significant expression of another distinguished observer, who had closely studied the relation of mortality and temperature, and wrote: "Waves of heat are waves of life; and waves of cold are waves of death."

I am fully prepared to admit that some localities in the State are very unhealthy, and that malarious diseases occur to a great extent in certain portions of the State; but I likewise contend that certain sections of the State cannot be equalled by any portion of the world for healthfulness; and some of the latter localities will be found on the south-west coast.

Army returns are generally the most reliable, and exceedingly important when we came to estimate the sanitary advantages of any given section. During the Florida war the soldiers were exposed at all seasons in various portions of the State, and only those who have visited the peninsula can form any idea of how terribly arduous must be campaigning through the swamps and everglades of the State. Yet, according to the army medical statistics, the yearly mortality from diseases in the army there, was only 26 per 1,000; and the average of the army elsewhere was 35 per 1,000; while in Texas it rose to 50, and on the lower Mississippi to 44 per 1,000.

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5.—Punta Rassa to Caloosahatchie.

En route we were repeatedly assured that we need not encumber our boat with a large stock of provisions, as a fresh supply could be purchased at old Lanier's store, at Fort Meyers. Early the next morning after our arrival I visited the store for the purpose of adding to our stock of hard tack, but found a total absence of the staff of life. Fearful that our supply of sugar would give out, I purchased four pounds, for which I paid one dollar. One of the residents kindly spared me one bushel of potatoes, and I paid therefor one dollar.

At this point I met Dr. McCallam, formerly of South Carolina, but who has settled thirty-five miles farther up the river. This gentleman informed me that he had half a barrel of flour at his camp, and if I would accept a portion, it was at my disposal when I reached his palmetto hut. Here was an awkward position—a limited supply of bread-stuff to carry us through a long journey, and none to be obtained nearer than Manatee; but we could not consent to impose on the Doctor, and leave him short of flour, so we concluded to go for the sweet potatoes, and hurry over our route.

To any one attempting a trip to Charlotte Harbor, or up the river, I would say, Carry, or have transported by the steamer Emilie to Punta Rassa, a sufficient supply of provisions for the return trip. They can be stored at the telegraph station until wanted. Uncle Sam has not supplied the residents above Punta Rassa with mail facilities, and advantage is taken of every opportunity to forward letters and papers to persons residing on the river. Dr. McCallam requested us to take charge of

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the letters and papers addressed to persons at or near his settlement, and we of course consented.

Anxious to reach our objective point, we left the fort at eight A. M. Commencing three miles above the fort, for a distance of nearly three miles the navigation is rendered difficult by islands and mud banks. At the lower, or west end, of the first island an extensive mud bank will be found, and the channel will be discovered on its north side, near the northern bank of the river. Soon after entering the channel several stakes will be noticed on the port side, and one on the starboard side of the channel. Opposite the upper end, and to the north of the first island, a small circular one will be discovered, which must be left to starboard. The next two islands must be kept to port, when a projecting point, studded, with tall cabbage palmettoes, will be sighted on the northern bank of the river. Beyond this point another island will be observed, which must be left on the port side. If attention is paid to these directions, and the shallow water on either hand of the channel looked for, no great difficulty will be experienced in navigating this troublesome locality. Above the upper island, navigation is easy to Fort Thompson. The river in the neighborhood of the upper islands is famous for its well-developed alligators. We devoted about an hour to their destruction, and killed eight—the smallest of which measured over ten feet. Above the islands the river narrows to a few hundred feet, and somewhat resembles the St. Johns above the Devil's Elbow. To within about two miles of the telegraph station the banks are low, and are covered with mangrove bushes, cabbage palmetto, and live-oak trees, with an undergrowth of ferns, some of the fronds measuring eight feet in length. If the tourist is a disciple of

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old Isaac we would advise him to drop a strongly geared spinner overboard after leaving the islands, for if disposed he can have his time fully occupied in landing cavalli ranging from two to twenty pounds. During our ascent of this stream we daily and hourly regretted the absence of a Grains (fishing spear), for we felt tempted to capture some of the large pompano that exist in countless numbers in this stream. We have seen a dozen of these huge fellows "breaking water" at once within fifty yards of the boat, but as they refused a bait their capture was impossible.

Late in the afternoon we reached the Caloosahatchie telegraph station, forty miles from Punta Rassa. At this point the line crosses the river, and the wanderer can communicate with home for the remarkably low price of two hundred and fifty cents. We received more than a hearty welcome from the gentlemanly operator in charge. Disposed to keep our teeth moving, we purchased from this gentleman two bushels of excellent sweet potatoes. Here we met a son of old Ireland, and were favored with a true Hibernian welcome, and an invitation to visit his residence and see the "ould woman and the bairns." He stated that he had two acres of superior sugar-cane under cultivation, and that he was about to make his first attempt at the manufacture of sugar. He assured us that if we would favor him with a visit he would present us with stalks of sugar-cane fourteen feet long. Ascertaining that his residence was two miles distant, we were forced to decline. The population of the locality consists of three families, including that of the operator and our Irish friend. Irishmen are to be found everywhere, and are ever ready to extend the hand of welcome to the wanderer. We deeply

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regretted that we could not visit our new-made acquaintance and discuss at his ingle-side the merits of the Cove of Cork and the demerits of the Ould Head of Kinsale; but the bareness (not of our exchequer) of our bread box stimulated us to push ahead. After supper, we fried a supply of sweet potatoes for the next day, and left our water keg with the operator. At this point the water was almost fresh, and we deemed it best to make room in our crowded boat.

Dr. McCallam's clearing being twenty miles farther up the river, we made an early start the next morning after our arrival. During the day we amused ourselves beating and rowing up the tortuous channel. Above the Caloosahatchie telegraph station the banks of the river become higher, and are studded with live-oaks and majestic palms. For miles in many places the banks are nearly perpendicular, and range from ten to eighteen feet high. On each bank, rich high hammocks extend back from the river for a distance of one-quarter to one-half a mile. Back of the hammocks rich pine land will be found, and beyond this the open prairie country, which will be described at some future time. Above the telegraph station the intending emigrant will find an admirable climate, excellent health, superior land, a noble river, and everything to induce a man to settle. The day is not far distant when this river will be bounded with happy homes, orange groves, farm and tropical productions, and the evidences of education, Christianity and civilization. We have at various times visited almost every portion of Florida, from the Appalachicola to the Atlantic, and from the Gulf to the northern boundary of the State, and we are forced to give this section our unqualified recommendation as the most

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desirable place for the pioneer. I admit that the region is wild and unfrequented, but the time is near when the river will be navigated by steamers, and residences, school houses, and churches will arise as if by magic.

Night overtook us, and as we were anxious to reach Dr. McCallam's residence we furled our sail and resorted to an ashen breeze. We had rowed but a short distance when we heard the welcome bark of a dog, and soon after, the pleasant sound of human voices. We hailed, and were met at the landing by five human beings. The welcome we received in this wild spot will long be remembered. We found one gentleman from New York, who had settled on a section next to that of Dr. McCallam's, and four from Rahway, New Jersey, two miles above, at Camellia Point. We announced the fact that we carried the mail, and the joyous shouts that arose on that river when the settlers received letters and newspapers from home, beggars all description. Aware of the fact that Dr. McCallam and his companion in this wilderness had but a limited supply of the necessaries of life, we positively declined a pressing invitation to stop and partake of the hospitalities of his backwoods home. As soon as we announced our intention of proceeding to the Jersey settlement, the Jerseymen pocketed letters and papers and followed us to the river bank. They took our boat in tow, and while rowing and paddling they yelled and laughed as joyous men never laughed and yelled before. After proceeding two miles we reached their camp, and landed. We found them comfortably settled in a palmetto hut, and apparently more than pleased with their new home. We started early the next morning, and were escorted for several miles by our new friends. It is a gratification to the wanderer to meet with a wel-

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come in the wilderness, and annoying to refuse hospitality when kindly and courteously tendered.

During the course of the forenoon we sighted a "'gator" about seven feet long, reclining on a grassy bank enjoying the sunshine. I handed Harry my Winchester, and requested him to shoot. He did so, and the 'gator quivered and dropped his head. Harry expressed satisfaction at the result of his maiden shot, and wondered what effect had been produced by the ball. I suggested that we should land and examine the critter. We did so, and Harry seized the brute by the tail and attempted to turn him over. Like a flash the dead 'gator doubled on himself, and endeavored to seize him by the hand. As a result, the pair stepped into the river, and the celerity with which Harry scrambled up the bank will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. Before the ugly customer could get away, I gave him a pill in his brain, and he turned his paws heavenward. Thus ended the only 'gator scrape worthy of record.

As we proceeded, the river gradually narrowed, and above the former site of Fort Donaud the overhanging live-oaks gave us some trouble. Still farther up the river, we met with shallows and annoying sand-bars and drift logs. Having rowed all day, we found ourselves tired at five P. M., and came to an anchor.

6.—Up the Caloosahatchie.

The annual rain-fall of South-west Florida is about sixty-five inches, but during the year 1874 the amount was but a fraction over thirty-one inches. In conse-

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quence, the river (Caloosahatchie) was nearly two feet lower than ever before known. Under ordinary conditions the river can be navigated to the rapids by a stern-wheeler with a light draught of water. Above the Caloosahatchie telegraph station the wanderer can at all times fill his frying-pan with luscious trout (bass). Before leaving Philadelphia, Shipley & Son made for us an eighteen-foot bamboo rod, which we found admirably adapted to fishing in the streams visited. With such a rod, and a few feet of line, the piscator can fish around the tops, fallen logs, and lily-pads, without any danger of fouling his bob or spinner.

As we were anxious to reach the rapids at Fort Thompson, the rising sun found us moving. Harry was aft, using the setting pole, and Frank and I manufactured an ashen breeze. Then we ascended the tortuous channel until night. Soon after camping we fancied that we heard a dog bark, and having seen no chasing, or evidence of settlement after leaving hospitable "Jerseydom," we were anxious to obtain information regarding our whereabouts. To attract attention, I discharged my gun, and Frank followed with his revolver. We listened, but no answer was returned. Early next morning my attention was attracted by the cracking of brush, and on looking shoreward, I noticed a white man peeping through the bushes. I hailed him, and on inquiry ascertained that his name was Cross, and that he had recently settled on a point a short distance above. He stated that he had heard the report of our fire-arms, but fancied "that it was the accursed Indians shooting, and in consequence he had not slept during the night." He expressed it as his opinion "that they would rise, and that another Indian war was in prospect." He

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favored us with his views of the "pesky critters," and assured us that they were a lazy, dirty, treacherous, and thieving lot, and that the whole race should be exterminated." Our visitor informed us that the Indian camp at Fort Thompson was distant three miles by land, and nine by the course of the river. We bade our friend good-by, and applied our muscles to oars and setting pole. He preceded us by land, and unwisely informed the Indians that some white men were coming up the river, armed with sixteen-shooting guns, with the intention of exterminating all the Indians about Lake Okeechobee. At 9 A. M. we grounded the bow of the boat Spray on the northern bank of the river below the falls. A few minutes afterward we discovered four Indians approaching, armed with rifles and long butcher knives. From their manner we fancied that there was a "screw loose in their celestial machinery." As they neared the boat I landed and shook hands with all. To my surprise they manifested sullenness and an indisposition to be friendly or communicative. Soon after, a squaw, and several young feminine representatives of poor Lo, approached, to whom I presented ear-rings, beads, and breast-pins, costing $1 per half-dozen sets. These presents exerted a happy influence, and the masculine Los expressed a wish to inspect our fire-arms. We exhibited our breech-loading arms and ammunition, which seemed to surprise them. All seemed to be new to them, and they expressed their surprise by remarking "Indian's rifles holywagus" (no good).

An examination of Drew's and Colton's maps will show a large lake existing at Fort Thompson, and another some miles east, named Hickpockee. These bodies of water only exist in the imagination of map-makers. As

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far as South-west Florida is concerned, maps are to a great extent unreliable, and calculated to mislead tourists. Fort Thompson was a large and important station during the Indian wars, but at present only a few decayed stubs exist to indicate where a stockade once protected scores of valiant men. Surrounding the falls, a rich prairie of 500 acres exists, covered with a luxurious growth of succulent and nutritious grasses—the site of a lake, according to the unreliable map-makers. We instituted many inquiries of Indians, settlers, and cattle drivers regarding Lake Hickpockee, but all scouted the idea of its existence. On the north side of the river, and about 600 feet therefrom, a grove of huge live-oaks exist, under whose protecting branches the Indians encamp during the winter months, when on their annual hunt. The region is underlaid with a horizontal stratum of hard limestone rock, from twelve to eighteen inches thick, and beneath this a softer stratum containing an immense number of shells. The river has worn a passage through the hard superficial layer of rock at this point, forming the rapids or falls of the Caloosahatchie river. We found the water to fall about five feet in two hundred. The channel at the rapids is about fifteen feet wide, and within a few inches of the surface we discovered numerous sharp-pointed rocks, over which we found it impossible to drag the Spray to the deep and smooth waters above. We noticed an Indian dug-out, above the rapids, and at once visited Lo's camp to make arrangements for an exploration of the river above the falls. By signs and words we communicated our wishes, but were informed that "canoe belonged to medicine man; he gone Big Cypress. Indian no use him canoe." Here was an awkward position, and Harry and

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I resolved on an exploration on foot. We started on the south bank of the river, but after floundering for a mile and a half through mud, water, cane-brakes, and saw-grass, we were forced to retreat. On my return I took my Shipley rod and went for a mess of fish. In a few minutes I landed two cavalli averaging four pounds, and five trout from one to seven pounds. In the afternoon we were gratified at seeing the face of a white man, and found that our visitor was named Carlton, who resided about two miles to the north of the fort. We expressed a wish to haul our boat around the rapids on skids and rollers, and Mr. Carlton kindly volunteered his assistance, and assured us that he would induce two more recent settlers to aid us. During the latter part of the afternoon we took a survey of the difficulties to be encountered, and provided skids, etc., to transport our boat around the rapids.

In the evening, one of the Indians, named Jimmy, visited us, and we eventually arranged with him to take the medicine man's canoe and paddle us up the river. Early on the morning of January 1st, in company with Harry and Indian Jimmy, I commenced an examination of the river above the falls. We had not proceeded over a quarter of a mile before we found a channel averaging sixty feet wide and six in depth. To say that it swarmed with numerous species of fish would not do justice to this stream. On the shores large alligators occupied the banks, and ducks, coots, yellow-legged snipe, curlews, cranes, herons, water turkeys, and other birds existed in countless numbers. My imagination painted a channel leading into the Lake Okeechobee, and that I should be favored with a view of this body of water. But disappointment was ahead. We had barely proceeded three

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miles when we found the channel to end in a broad expanse of saw-grass. A careful examination revealed about two inches of water and three of tenacious black mud overlying the horizontal layer of limestone rock. Pocketing our disappointment, we turned the bow of the canoe campward. From our own observations, and from such information as I could collect from cattle-raisers, herdsmen, and Indians, I am convinced that my preconceived opinions are correct—that the Caloosahatchie river is the main outlet of Lake Okeechobee. I am satisfied that the lake is not more than eight miles in an easterly direction from Fort Thompson, and that it can be reached by a light flat-bottomed boat at an ordinary stage of water. The Indians would not explain how the medicine man had transported his canoe from the lake to the fort; but as no other route exists, he must have brought it by the course of the river before the water became as low as we found it.

On our return, we found Mr. Carlton and his two friends ready to assist us in hauling our boat around the rapids; but as we had explored the river, we politely declined accepting their kind assistance. Upon inquiry, I found that Mr. Carlton had a wagon and a team of bullocks, and my first idea was to transport the Spray to Fish Eating creek, a distance of fourteen miles, descend the creek, circumnavigate the lake, ascend the Kissimmee, and return via the St. Johns river to Jacksonville. Upon questioning Mr. C., I found that his wagon was not broad enough for the Spray, and that it would be necessary to construct a new pair of axletrees for the purpose. The delay attending this arrangement, and our short stock of provisions, induced us to abandon it. Mr. Carlton had a pow-wow with the Indians, and

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ascertained that they had three canoes at Old Fort Centre, on Fish Eating creek. Mr. C. finally induced Billy Osceola to accompany us, and we arranged to start the next morning for the lake. Mr. C. returned home to prepare for the journey, and we amused ourselves by visiting the Indian camp. One peculiarity of the feminine Lo is a love for beads, and instead of decorating herself with panniers, laces, furbelows, and false hair, she goes in for glass. After some persuasion, and amid peals of laughter, we induced a squaw of sweet sixteen to divest herself of her neck ornaments. When the operation was completed we had suspended on our arm forty-six strings of large glass beads, weighing, at the lowest estimate, ten pounds. The only article of dress worn by the juvenile representatives of Eve was a few strings of beads. The dress of masculine Lo was, to use a novelistic expression, picturesque and romantic in the extreme. Their head-dress consists of from four to five small woollen shawls, costing two dollars and a half apiece. To arrange this capital encumbrance, Lo folds a shawl four inches wide, places the initial end on the forehead, winds the folded shawl tightly around the head, and tucks the outer end under the first coil. This procedure is followed with each shawl until the horizontal and ridiculous-looking structure is completed. They all wear calico shirts, with gray vests; and these garments, with breech cloths, completed the dress of our new acquaintances.

Early next morning found us under way for Lake Okeechobee, in company with Mr. Carlton and Billy Osceola. We followed an old wagon trail leading to Old Fort Centre, on Fisk Eating creek. This trail had been made during the Indian wars, since which time it has

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been followed by settlers, cattle-raisers, and cattle. Mid-day found us near the dry bed of a summer water-course, where we camped for dinner. I took a spade and dug a shallow hole, from which we obtained water for coffee. After eating, I seated myself in the centre of the trail to enjoy my old pipe. Frank laid himself down a few feet from me, and almost instantly jumped up, with an exclamation. His fright was easily accounted for, for we heard the warning rattle of the death-dealing snake, within reach of whose fangs he had reclined. He seized his rifle and fired, but excitement spoiled his aim ; he then used his revolver, and with the last chamber wounded his snakeship. In the interim one of the party provided himself with a stick, and soon finished the rattler. Frank claimed the rattles, which, upon removal, numbered eight and a button.

After our encounter with the snake we hitched up the oxen and started for the lake. Night found us four miles from the large mound at Old Fort Centre. Here we camped, and were favored with the bellowing of an ancient alligator in an adjoining swamp. Early next morning found us following the trail, and at 8 A. M. we reached Old Fort Centre. Leaving Mr. Carlton to take care of the bullocks, we soon found an Indian canoe and started for the lake, distant, according to the statement of our guide, four miles. We forced our way through several extensive beds of the floating lettuce, and after poling and paddling for two miles, reached a continuous bed of this plant. We were provided with two paddles and a pushing pole sixteen feet long. The banks of the creek were perpendicular, and the water from twelve to fourteen feet deep. In this stream the lettuce was larger and more luxuriant than any we had ever seen in

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the State. The roots were very long and perfectly matted, and we endeavored to force a passage through the obstruction, but might as well have tried to paddle or pole our canoe through one of the New York docks. For many years I had looked forward with pleasure to the day when I should visit Okeechobee, and nothing but disappointment loomed up before me. To force a passage for several miles through the lettuce we found to be impossible, and after considering the matter I resolved to reach the lake by wading and wallowing through the water, mud, and saw-grass of the swamps between me and the lake, and accordingly hauled the canoe ashore.

Had I been aware of the difficulties to be encountered, I have reason to believe that I could have surmounted them, and reached the lake by the course of the creek. If I should again visit Fish Eating creek I would provide myself with two hooked sticks about twelve feet long. If one man was stationed on each side of the canoe, say ten feet from the stern, and the two to hook into the lettuce on each side of the stern, and make traction toward the stern, we are convinced that such a manœuvre would make a passage for a canoe; and the force applied would propel her ahead. From our knowledge of the growth, and the difficulties to be encountered in forcing a passage through such an obstruction, we would advise tourists to test the mode suggested.

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7.—Visit to Lake Okeechobee.

We left the canoe beached, or, more properly speaking, mudded, on the north side of Fish Eating creek, and steered a course for what we considered the bank of the lake. The walking we found excellent, although not equalling that of Broadway. Beginning at the surface we found one foot of water, and beneath the aqueous element fifteen inches of black, tenacious mud. Every motion of the legs was obstructed by lily-pads spatterdocks, lettuce, trailing vines, and fresh-water plants in endless variety. Above the water, saw-grass, reeds, and rushes seriously interfered with vision as well motion. Resolved upon reaching the lake, our grand objective point, we trudged on, and having proceeded about two miles reached a large floating island that had been drifted on the marsh during the hurricane of the preceding October. Frank seated himself on the island and vowed that he would "proceed no farther.' When youth gave out and cried "peccavi," it was time for old fogydom to push ahead, so I laid a course for a small tree, on what appeared to have been a floating island, and after an unpleasant tramp of two hundred yards I reached the oasis, and found growing upon it a swamp oak fifteen feet in height. By signs and words I directed Billy Osceola to ascend the oak; he did so, and shouted "Okeechobee, Okeechobee." I claim no relationship to the feline race, but the way I scrambled up that juvenile oak was a caution to the cat family. Reaching the upper branches, I was rewarded with a view of the mysterious lake, distant about six hundred feet. From the time of my first visit to the south coast

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of Florida, in 1874, I had been looking forward with pleasure to a period when I should be favored with a view of the lake; and here it was before me. My great desire was to navigate and thoroughly examine its various outlets, and if possible discover a practicable boat route to the ocean; but I was disappointed. At some future time, if we can find the congenial companions, we propose reaching the lake, via the Ochlawaha and Kissimmee rivers. In an ordinary stage of water we are convinced that a boat could be navigated through the marsh between the lake and the rapids on the Caloosahatchie. But to the uninitiated the great difficulty would be to determine at what particular point to leave the lake.

About four hundred feet from the shore we noticed a very large cypress tree, which would prove a guide for persons searching for the mouth of Fish Eating creek. From what we could ascertain from the lay of the land (or, more properly speaking, swamp), and from the statements of Billy, the mouth of the creek is south of the large cypress half a mile. From our point of observation the lake trended to the south, and we are convinced that in a direct line the shore of the lake is distant from Fort Thompson not over eight or nine miles. Having gratified our curiosity regarding the lake, and accomplished all we could, under the circumstances, we started on the home stretch, and ultimately reached the canoe, tired and exhausted. We would most respectfully recommend a five-mile experience of such walking to Weston when he trains for one of his pedestrian feats. As regards "Al Fresco," he without the least hesitation asserts that he has had enough of Okeechobee swamp experience to last him a life-time. We have wandered in more than one section of the

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world, and have had some queer experiences, but our jaunt from the creek to the lake, and return, excelled anything in the past, and convinced us that hunting Seminole Indians must have been anything but an amusing and pleasant occupation.

Reaching the canoe, Billy paddled, and Frank and I amused ourselves ventilating the 'gators that exposed themselves on the banks of the creek. Arriving at Old Fort Centre, I visited the large Indian mound while Mr. Carlton hitched up our bovine friends. I found the mound to be four hundred feet long, one hundred and fifty wide, and about forty high. At a point where some former visitor had made a small excavation I scratched with a stick and found remains of human skeletons. In our opinion, this mound is worthy of being opened, and I trust that some future visitor will be amply provided with stores, so as to enable him to spend a few days in the locality and carefully examine it. With the exception of one mound on the east bank of the Caloosahatchie river, this is the largest we have noticed in the south. Seating ourselves in our springless conveyance, we started for New Fort Centre, which we reached about dark. Feeling tired, I resolved upon having a good bed, and by the light of pine-wood fire gathered a large quantity of the Spanish moss (*Tillanusia*), hanging in luxuriant festoons from every tree. After supper I carefully arranged my mossy couch and turned in. Old Somnus soon took possession of the man, and I have reason to believe that I was guilty of some responsible snoring until about midnight, when I was aroused by an unpleasant sensation of burning, smarting, and itching. For a few minutes I made the situation a practical study, and realized the fact that I had discovered something new to

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me under the sun. I soon ascertained that I was covered with insects. I went for the moss, threw it out of the wagon, and selected the softest board to finish my night's rest. I had on numerous occasions during my wanderings suffered from the effects of seed and ordinary ticks, but here was something exceeding all my past experiences in bug operations. To sleep was impossible, so I devoted the remainder of the night to scratching. I have read of the patience of historic Job, but I have reason to believe that he never suffered from a visitation of Florida "red bugs." Upon inquiry, I was informed that my attentive and industrious visitors were called red bugs, and were only to be found on the Spanish moss in the southern portion of the State. Our earnest advice to future wanderers is to give mossy couches a wide berth.

On our return to the boat we prepared a saturating solution of common salt, and with it sponged several times daily, and at the end of the second day dissolved our connection with Florida red bugs. We are at a loss to determine exactly what effect was produced on the bugs by the salt, but we discovered the fact, that wherever we had removed the skin by scratching, the effect of the solution was anything but pleasant.

Starting before old Sol appeared above the eastern horizon, we reached our boats at four o'clock in the afternoon. South-west of the lake, nearly to the shore of Charlotte harbor, and from the Caloosahatchie river to Peas creek, a distance of sixty miles, the sportsman will find a beautiful prairie, clothed with luxuriant and nutritious grasses, different from those of the St. Johns and Atlantic sections. This vast expanse of hunting ground is dotted with "islands," that is to say, spots clothed with live-oaks and majestic palms. These

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islands vary from a few square rods to fifty acres, and here and there will be found small belts of pine timber, the islands and belts furnishing ample shelter for game. We were charmed with the country, and deeply regretted our inability to camp out and enjoy a few weeks' hunting in the neighborhood of Fish Eating creek. From our own experience, and the statements made by reliable parties, we have no hesitation in asserting that this section is unequalled by any portion of the United States, for deer hunting or turkey shooting. In crossing the prairie from New Fort Centre, large herds of deer were frequently visible on each side of the trail, but the effects of swamp journeying, and a night's exercise fighting red bugs, prevented us from leaving the wagon and attempting to shoot a deer. Owing to the inequality of the surface, and the protection afforded by the tall grass and patches of saw palmetto, deer can be approached without difficulty. At the period of our visit the Indians were on their annual hunt to Fort Thompson, and a large proportion of the deer had been driven to points a few miles distant. Since the removal of the Seminoles, deer have roamed and increased on the prairie undisturbed. As an evidence of the superiority of this section as a hunting ground, we need but cite the fact that the Indians residing on the eastern side of the lake, and in the Miami region, annually visit Fort Thompson for their winter's hunt. With the exception of the few annually destroyed in the neighborhood of Fort Thompson by poor Lo, deer roam undisturbed, the grasses are nutritious, climatic conditions favorable, and, as a consequence, the amount of deer in this section is fabulous. This locality is truly the hunter's paradise, and must be visited to be appreciated. I have no hesitation in stating

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that the still hunter can kill from ten to twelve deer daily. If he desires variety, he will find numberless turkeys on the banks of the creek, or in the adjoining islands; or, if disposed to indulge in fishing, all that will be necessary is to use a bob, spinner, or fly, and he will soon tire of landing the largest and fattest trout in the State.

If any one should contemplate a visit to this region we would recommend as a site for his camp a point on the creek ten or fifteen miles west of New Fort Centre. To reach this locality the sportsman can take steamer to Charleston, Savannah, or Fernandina, and railroad to Cedar Keys; or steamer from New York to Key West. Punta Rassa can be reached from Cedar Keys or Key West by steamer Emilie, sailing weekly. From Punta Rassa sportsmen can ascend the river to Fort Thompson, or take a bullock dray from Fort Meyers. Mr. Carlton resides two miles north of Fort Thompson, and for $3 per day will furnish a conveyance to the creek. But to find Mr. C.'s residence after reaching the fort would be the rub. If any person should desire his assistance, a few simple directions might prove valuable. Landing on the west side of the river below the rapids, a northerly course must be kept, leaving the river to the right and the timber to the left. Two miles from the landing-place Mr. Carlton's residence will be noticed to the left, near some large pine timber. Mr. C. will be found to be a good guide—kind, sociable, attentive, and moderate in his charges; in fact, a gentleman whom we can unhesitatingly recommend to the favorable notice of sportsmen.

With regard to the Indians, we have only to state that, after the first few days we found them sociable and

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pleasant neighbors. The females are modest and retiring, and, from what we could learn, are remarkable for chastity. Those we met did not appear to have an appetite for intoxicating liquors, and with the exception of Johnny, a half-breed (part Indian and part negro), they seemed to be strictly honest. The Indians stated that Jimmy was "holywagus" (no good), and we arrived at the same conclusion. We missed a pocket knife, which we had reason to believe Jimmy appropriated. Descending the river, we overtook Jimmy at one of his camps, and found one of our spinners attached to his fishing line. He assured us that he had found it; but his statement was received *cum grano salis*. To persons visiting Fort Thompson we can recommend Billy Osceola as a good and attentive guide, and, as far as our observation went, perfectly reliable. Curiosity appears to be a prominent trait of these Indians, and their desire to see and examine everything, at times proved annoying. To escape their inquisitiveness we would anchor the boat in mid-channel, and they would seat themselves on the shore, and stoically wait for hours for us to get back with the boat.

The Indians of Florida are so advanced in civilization as to shun politics, rings, and peculation, and are disposed to remain honest, and untainted by the intrigues of carpet-baggers. They are entitled to one representative in the State Legislature; and this fact having been discovered by an aspiring carpet-bagger, he visited Spotted Tail and solicited his influence. Old Spotted Tail listened to his eloquent pleading, and rather abruptly ended the interview by exclaiming, "Indian no want politics; go to h——."

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8.—Indian Mounds and Canals.

We left Fort Thompson with reluctance, but our nearly-exhausted bread-box prompted us to reach Manatee at an early day. We commenced the descent of the river, and resolved upon thinning out the 'gators. Before reaching Punta Rassa, we footed up our 'gator account, and found that we had settled the affairs of ninety-four on the Caloosahatchie, the best day's sport being thirty-six. We have done some little shooting in our time; but for excitement and amusement give preference to 'gator perforating, and can confidently recommend the Caloosahatchie to those who wish to engage in this description of sport. At this point I may remark, that we thoroughly tested the Winchester and Remington rifles; and for penetration, convenience of loading, accuracy of shooting, and general usefulness, we are forced to give the decided preference to the former.

Passing a bayou twenty miles below Fort Thompson, Harry noticed a woodcock, and we landed. In this retired and beautiful spot we started seven, the only ones we noticed during our wanderings. We have often thought that these birds have a taste for the beautiful in nature, for they are generally found where nature has been most lavish in her offerings. After leaving the Caloosahatchie telegraph station, and before reaching the islands above Fort Thompson, we towed our spinners astern, but soon tired of landing cavalli ranging from five to fifteen pounds. Reaching Punta Rassa, we steered across the Caloosa entrance, entered Matanzas Pass, and proceeded southward toward the Erastro and Corkscrew rivers. If time had permitted we would

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have ascended these streams and described an unknown, but, we have reason to believe, an interesting section. Reluctantly we turned the prow of the Spray northward. *En route* we visited the northern end of Pine Island, situated three miles north of Useppi. Here we found a Yankee named Ham, who had resided there for twenty-four years. At the landing we found two luxuriant cocoa-nut trees in fruit, and back of the hut, roasting ears, garden vegetables, and several hundred lemon trees loaded down with their golden fruit. At this point will be found four of the largest mounds on the coast, and the archæologist will be pointed to something interesting and calculated to puzzle him. The island is three miles wide, and, with the exception of a few hundred feet on each side, is traversed by a canal forty feet wide and eight feet in depth. Mr. Ham assured me that a similar excavation existed on the main land, and could be traced in a direct line toward Okeechobee for a distance of fourteen miles. On the north side of Caloosahatchie river, near its source, a similar canal is found, and of about three miles in length. I was assured by a reliable party familiar with the locality, that a similar one existed on one of the Thousand Islands. The question arises, Who excavated these canals, or for what purpose were they dug? It is a well-known fact that the Indians were too indolent to engage in such an undertaking. There cannot be a question regarding these excavations having been made by man, but why made, or by whom, is the question. An examination of the live-oak trees growing in and on the sides of the excavation negatives any argument that they could have been the work of the early Spaniards or the Seminoles. From our knowledge of the Indian tribes it is not probable

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that these canals were dug by the Yamassees. We think that a thorough examination should be made of these ancient works by the Smithsonian authorities, as such an investigation might lead to interesting developments regarding the earlier races inhabiting the south-west portion of the peninsula. In addition to the canals referred to, the large Indian mounds on the south-west coast deserve examination. Such an exploration would fall within the legitimate sphere of the institution referred to, and the expense incurred would be trifling compared to probable results. During the trip, birds, fish, and marine and fresh-water algæ could be collected, and the institution benefited thereby.

Leaving Pine Island, with its hospitable inhabitants, we made for Bird Key, one mile west of Useppi. This small island consists of about forty acres, and is covered with large mangrove trees. At one time it boasted of inhabitants, for where we landed the shore had been carefully paved with large clam shells. It is the rookery, or roosting place, for the multitudes of birds that frequent Charlotte Harbor. On the island will be found pelicans, gannet, cormorants, water turkeys, cranes, and herons of all kinds, sizes, and descriptions. A person desirous of collecting ornithological specimens would find this a desirable locality. In the evening we amused ourselves by shooting white herons for their plumes, and the noise made by the birds after each discharge beggars all description. We left Bird Key and adjoining coast islands, after devoting a couple of days to their examination.

Wending our way homeward, we reached the northern end of Gasparilla Island, and came to a halt for a time. We had been sceptical regarding the fish stories that had been told us about the fish in this region, but after

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having practically tested the matter, we are prepared to credit almost anything we hear stated, or see printed, regarding fish and fishing on the south-west coast of Florida. I am somewhat of a veteran and energetic fisherman, but for the first time in my life became surfeited with one hour's fishing at the inner point of Little Gasparilla Inlet. At the young flood, Harry, Frank, and I visited the inlet and noticed a school of minnows being chased by a red-fish. To escape their pursuers, hundreds jumped on the sand, and with hands and feet we assisted many more to land. We commenced with rods and reels, but were forced to abandon these fancy implements; for while we were engaged playing a large red, or other fish, he would be gobbled by a shark, and tackle would go by the board. I hooked a large red-fish which was taken by a large shark, and to my regret I found that I had secured an elephant. I showed fight, the last foot of line left my reel, and my excellent and serviceable Shipley bamboo rod was soon *in extremis*. The rod bent like a bit of steel, but the braided line held—one joint after another was strained, and at last the line parted, and I was left alone in my glory, with a strained and dilapidated Shipley rod. Resolved upon having a little piscatorial amusement, I visited the boat and obtained three strong lines eighty feet long, attached an eight-ounce sinker and two large hooks to each, and again entered the lists. We baited with the minnows, and would throw our lines out their full length. Almost instantly the baits would be taken by red-fish ranging from five to twenty pounds, cavalli, weak-fish, bone-fish, grunts, or red and black grouper of large size. We unhooked the fish and returned them to their native element. At the end of an hour, Harry, Frank, and "Al Fresco" abandoned the

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sport exhausted and demoralized. Some of our readers will say that this was unnecessary slaughter, and not sport. I am prepared to admit the soft impeachment, but in extenuation enter the plea that we followed up the amusement in order that our readers could form an opinion regarding the kind of sport obtainable on the south-west coast. Some will probably say that "this was equal to pot hunting, and that the piscator would only capture fish in an artistic manner, with rod and reel." To such we will simply say, Hook and play a ten or fifteen-pound red fish for a few minutes, and then secure an addition of from eight to twelve lineal feet of shark, and one such catch, and rods, lines, and reels would "go up." Inside the inner point, sheepsheading is excellent, the fish ranging from one to five pounds. With a stout nine-foot rod and three hooks baited with fiddlers, from one to three sheepshead can be captured at almost every cast. The water is very clear, and the bottom a white shell bank, and the fish are visible in dozens, slowly swimming along in search of food. Fiddlers of large size can be secured in quantity for bait on most of the sandy keys. To obtain them easily nothing more is necessary than to dig them out of the sand, where their holes are visible. If placed in an ordinary wooden pail they will live for many days. Red and other fish will readily take cut-fish bait, but seem to prefer minnows.

I noticed numerous deer tracks on the island, and suggested to Frank and Harry that they should kill one. After their departure for the central portion of the island, I seated myself on an empty pail and engaged in catching sheepshead and throwing them in again, unless so badly hooked as to render them unfit for anything but

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a frying pan; I was absorbed in the amusement, when I was startled by a large buck and doe plunging into the bay within a few feet of my person. When Harry and Frank returned they informed me that they had started a number, fired at two, but did not kill. All the larger islands are stocked with deer, and on most of them dogs are unnecessary; in fact still hunting is the preferable mode. Coons in immense numbers exist on these islands, and their tracks are visible everywhere near the bay beaches. On the mud flats opposite our camping place thousands of snipe and curlews could be seen at any time, apparently waiting to be destroyed. In the centre of the island the sportsman will find a large fresh-water lagoon, where excellent water can be obtained. For the invalid who is piscatorially inclined, and who desires an excellent climate, we would say, Spend a few weeks or months on the northern end of Little Gasparilla. The air is pure, water excellent, frost absent, sea bathing unequalled, fishing beyond description, deer plentiful on the island and on the main land. To the sportsman this island offers many inducements, and I would earnestly advise any one visiting Charlotte Harbor to spend some days here. Yesterday I received a communication from a gentleman residing in the interior of Pennsylvania, in which I find the following:

"I have greatly desired to visit Florida for years past, but have feared the trip on account of fevers and bad water. I have also heard much of the insects of Florida, and am enough of an angler to have a wholesome dread of the woods in fly time."

I proposed postponing the consideration of these subjects until the final communication, but as I find so much ignorance prevailing on many points, I shall take

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advantage of this letter to ventilate these subjects. Excellent water can be obtained at any settlement, or from the rivers and creeks above salt water. On a few of the islands fresh ponds and lagoons can be found, where a supply can be secured. On Pine, Useppi, and Lacosta islands, a superior article can be obtained. On any of the islands a fair to good sample can be found by digging a well from two to four feet deep. At Punta Rassa and Fort Meyers, cistern water can be secured. From the streams and springs north of Clear Water Harbor, water equalling the Croton can be found. If the sportsman carries with him one or two five-gallon water kegs he will not suffer. We could find room for but one five-gallon keg, and we managed very well. Aware of the suffering that results from a deficient supply of good water, I was induced in a previous communication to refer to the subject.

I have visited nearly all portions of Florida except Indian river and Bay Biscayne region, both in winter and summer, and can safely assert that I have suffered more from mosquitoes in one day at the head of Lake Superior, and at Barnegat, New Jersey, than I have during all my visits to Florida combined. From what I have heard stated and seen published I have reason to believe that insects are troublesome on the Indian river, but this should not be made to apply to the whole of the State. I spent nearly two months on the south-west coast, traversed several degrees of latitude and longitude, visited most of the bays, rivers, creeks, and islands, and I can positively assert that I was really annoyed on but one occasion with sand-flies and mosquitoes, and that was one afternoon and evening when we were encamped in the spring of the Chisiowilski. We made it a rule to

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anchor a short distance from shore every night; but if the sportsman encamps on land he will be somewhat annoyed by mosquitoes in the early part of the evening. The mosquitoes of the south-west coast are lethargic, and not active and industrious, as are those of Lake Superior and New Jersey. We carried with us a full supply of mosquito netting and thin muslin to protect us from sand-flies, but the original packages were brought back unopened. I will admit that I was put through by the "red bugs," but my sufferings were the result of ignorance, and my dearly bought experience will benefit others. At Cedar Keys, Manatee, and Tampa, a few fleas will be found, but never away from settlements or hog nests. At Fort Thompson I thoughtlessly entered one of Captain Henry's old palmetto-leaf shanties, where dozens of hogs slept nightly, and as a result I was literally covered with fleas. I secured such a supply that I was forced to strip and sink my clothing to the bottom of the river, and drown the active customers. If the sportman steers clear of settlements and hog nests, he will not find a flea in the southern portion of the State. The last night I spent at Cedar Keys I found that the bed contained a number of fleas, and that to sleep was impossible. I searched my coat, and removed from one of my pockets a box of insect powder. I sprinkled a small quantity in the bed, a little in each shirt sleeve, and some on my neck; a few fanning motions of my shirt and the top sheet, and peace reigned supreme. The Persian Insect Powder should be carried by every sportsman who runs any risk of coming in contact with fleas or bed bugs. If the latter prove troublesome, a small quantity sprinkled on the lower sheet will act like magic, and nearly every bug that enters the bed will be found

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lifeless in the morning. My experience is that the yarns spun about insect life in Florida is, to a great extent, "twaddle and stuff." I suffer more from fleas than any person I have ever met, and have received so much benefit from the use of the Insect Powder that I am induced to refer to it.

With regard to fevers of an intermittent, remittent, or continued type, I believe they are unknown on the south-west coast during the winter months, and that, taking the year through, it is the healthiest section in the United States. I sometimes think that a man could not contract disease on the coast during the winter months. I am a medical man of many years' experience, and before leaving home filled my pocket-case with medicines, in addition to sundry bottles and pill boxes. Companions and self were frequently wet, and for nearly two months slept under a thin canvas cover open at the ends, and not a particle of medicine was required. The only article of medicine we were short of was pilot bread, and others may be benefited by our experience. In all my wanderings in the State, I have seen but one diminutive scorpion, and that I captured at Fort Thompson. I resided for twelve years in a portion of the world where scorpions are plentiful, and I never knew any person to be seriously injured by their venom. With regard to the bugbear of snakes, I have only to remark, that during the period of my recent visit to the State I saw but four —a rattlesnake near Fort Thompson, a black snake on the Caloosahatchie, a garter snake on Gasparilla Island, and a water snake on the Chisiowilski. On one occasion, in passing through the interior from Tampa to Silver Spring, I noticed a large rattlesnake lying by the side of a log, and stopped the conveyance to destroy him, but

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found that some one had performed the duty before my arrival. Hence I have met with two rattlesnakes in the State, one alive and one dead. I am prepared to admit that they exist in the State, and that they are fully developed specimens; but where one can be found in Florida, a dozen can be killed in the mountainous regions of Pennsylvania. My statement may differ from others, but I describe things as I found them. Before leaving the North I provided three large India rubber blankets to make leggings to protect the party from the fangs of rattlesnakes, and it affords me pleasure to state that I have the blankets uncut in my possession.

9.—TAMPA.

A FAIR wind favoring us, we left Little Gasparilla Pass at 7.30 A. M., and reached Little Sarasota Inlet at 3.20 P. M.—a run of thirty-eight miles. *En route* we noticed two boats, and several objects moving on the beach. Examining them with our glass we discovered that the men were poling the boat against a head wind, and that the females had landed on the beach, and were keeping pace with their lords. A peculiarity of the south-west coast is a calm ocean and little, if any, surf, unless after a storm, enabling persons to land without inconvenience or danger. Having sailed over many oceans, and visited more than one coast line, we had formed an unfavorable opinion of shore lines and surf generally, but we returned to our northern home with changed opinions, as far as the south-west coast is concerned. Our first thirty-eight miles of sea navigation

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were undertaken with some reluctance, but the return voyage was simply viewed in the light of a pleasure trip, and was found to be most enjoyable. If I undertake another cruise on the coast, it is more than probable that I shall take the outside route, and thereby escape the annoyance of oyster bars and mud flats; as a matter of course, if the bosom of old mother ocean happen to be lumpy, with an uncomfortable amount of dust flying, I would take the inside route. The entire coast from Cedar Keys to Charlotte Harbor can be safely navigated in a 16-foot Whitehall skiff. As proof that our opinion is not based upon a few miles of sea work or one day's experience outside of the islands, our voyaging at sea amounts to over 175 miles.

Entering Sarasota Inlet and finding the wind favorable we kept on our course, and reached the neighborhood of Anna Maria Keys, at the head of Sarasota Bay, at 10 P. M., where we anchored for the night. Starting early next morning, we reached Manatee at 9 A. M. At 10 A. M. the steamer Emilie moored to the dock, and the courteous captain (Lefferts) kindly offered to give us a tow to Tampa, forty miles distant, which we accepted with thanks. We reached Tampa early in the afternoon, and received a hearty welcome from many friends. Tampa is situated on the Hillsboro river, where it enters Tampa Bay, and is a pleasant town of about five hundred inhabitants. Society is excellent, and the inhabitants kind and hospitable in the extreme. The climate is good, and an invalid who is partial to quietness might spend a winter there very pleasantly. The town contains several boarding-houses, and from information gleaned from several parties I can recommend the house kept by D. Isaac Craft. I visited the house, and found

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everything neat and clean. Mr. Craft's terms are $60 per month for two persons in a room. During the winter months the climate is pleasant, and the health of the place unexceptionable. At this place I made the acquaintance of Dr. Wall, and found him genial and courteous in the extreme, and, as a medical man, we formed a favorable opinion of his attainments, and we can assure invalids that if they should visit the place, they will find in the doctor a gentleman and an educated and skilful practitioner of medicine. I am convinced that Tampa would be more frequently visited if invalids could but realize the climatic advantages of the south-west coast.

For the piscator, Tampa does not present many inducements. A few miles up the river, fair trout fishing can be obtained, and about the docks and in the channel, passable sheepsheading will be found. By taking a row or sail boat, and proceeding to the oyster bar, nine miles down the bay, superior sheepshead and drum fishing can be enjoyed. On the morning of our departure we were notified that a hunting and fishing party had been made up for our benefit; that it was the intention of the party to take a boat and outfit, by a mule team, to a point on the river forty miles above Tampa, and to fish the river and hunt the south bank on the return trip. To have carried out the programme, from ten to fourteen days would have been required, and as our time was limited we found it impossible to accept the invitation so kindly extended. At this point I made the acquaintance of Mr. Charles Moore, originally of Boston, Massachusetts, but a resident of Tampa since the war. Mr. M. informed us that he would furnish sportsmen with a boat, mule team and wagon and his services, for $5 per day—truly a cheap

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hunting and fishing outfit. He stated his intention of building, during the ensuing summer, a boat suitable for the coast, and that he would be prepared to fit out and accompany sporting parties on reasonable terms. In this connection we may remark that several parties residing at Manatee can supply boats adapted to the wants of coasting parties; and to ascertain names and prices, tourists might address Edmund E. Lee, Esq., Manatee. Being acquainted with this gentleman, we feel assured that he would aid tourists and others in any way.

We cleaned boat, aired clothing, and purchased a barrel of "new and first-class pilot bread," and left Tampa, with its hospitable inhabitants, behind. We reached the oyster bar at 8 P. M., and came to anchor. In the morning we laid in a stock of oysters, and proceeded to the wreck of the H. M. Cool, to the south of Gadsden's Point. We tested the fishing about the reef, but, to our surprise, failed to capture fish enough for our dinner. Onward and northward being our motto, we steered for Big Bayou, where we found a safe anchorage for the night.

But to the biscuit business. I have reason to believe that my readers will conclude that the crew of the Spray had an attack of biscuits on the brain, but when it becomes necessary to keep the teeth going and the staff of life cannot be obtained, the biscuit business becomes an important subject. We purchased our barrel of "fresh and first-class pilot bread" from a firm whose names we shall not mention; for it is possible that the clerk may have made a mistake and delivered the wrong barrel. We opened the barrel, and the first thing that met our gaze were hundreds of well-developed cockroaches. We carefully separated biscuits from roaches,

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the bread being consigned to our bread box and the roaches to the briny deep. We made an attack upon the new biscuit, but discovered that eating them was a difficult undertaking; for each biscuit contained numerous slate-colored insects tasting like quinine. To eat such bread was impossible, so we were forced to fall back on sweet potatoes and fish until we could reach Clear Water Harbor. To intending tourists or sportsmen we would say: lay in an ample supply of pilot bread before leaving New York or Savannah, and not trust to luck, as did "Al Fresco" and his companions. It is possible that a supply of edible biscuit may be obtained on the coast another year, but if we ever visit the region again we shall lay in a larger stock of bread than we did on the occasion of our last cruise.

Mullet Key, at the mouth of Tampa Bay, is a noted range for deer, and the still hunter will find it worth a visit. We were informed by a gentleman of the colored persuasion, who was in the habit of visiting the island, that rattlesnakes were plentiful and of a remarkable size; this statement we give as we received it, but would suggest to hunters the propriety of wearing leggings and looking out for "snakes in the grass" if they ever visit this island. Leaving Point Prunelles we steered a course for John's Pass, and landed on the island on the west side of the entrance, and in a few minutes captured a number of fine sheepshead. This locality is noted for its beautiful marine algæ, and we deeply regretted the want of proper appliances to collect and preserve specimens. On the point of the island, at the north side of the entrance, we found a shallow lagoon containing fish, a matter of interest to sportsmen and tourists. An examination of the end of the island showed the ex-

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istence of deer tracks in every direction. We hoisted sail and steered a course for the northern end of Tampa Bay, where we found the bay to diminish in width, and assume the appearance of a river. On our left, the shore of the sea island varied from six to ten feet high, and on right, or main land side, mud and grassy flats were frequently passed, and these were literally covered with ducks, snipe, and curlews. As we approached the head of Clear Water Harbor we found the passage to become very narrow, and ultimately end in a shallow mud-flat, where the Spray grounded. The tide was ebbing, so we deemed it best to apply a muscular breeze and reach deep water. Harry pulled at the cable, and Frank and I applied ourselves to the stern of the boat, and in this way we worked her for two hundred yards in less than one foot of water. Soon after reaching Clear Water Harbor we sighted Mrs. Teemer's residence, and landed. From Mrs. T. we purchased a supply of the largest and most delicious oranges to be obtained on the south-west coast. It was the Sabbath when we reached the dock, at the first store in the harbor, and we deemed it advisable to secure a supply of crackers. We visited the store, and the old fellow who kept it being religiously inclined, at first positively refused to sell us anything to eat, but when I assured him that we were in want he opened his heart and consented to sell us enough to last until morning. I engaged him in conversation regarding oranges, climate, soil, and the advantages and resources of the locality, and before I left purchased all his soda and sugar crackers. My clothing was anything but attractive, but when the sanctimonious old gentleman saw me open my pocket-book, and noticed that it contained the sinews of war, his Christian prejudices melted like ice in

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July. Before leaving, he induced Frank to purchase a small bunch of bananas, but when we attempted to eat them we found that they equalled a poor turnip in flavor. The land at this point is excellent, health unexcelled, and the climate all that can be desired by the settler. The land along the harbor is high, and the locality is rapidly settling up. At the passes the fishing is inferior, as compared with many points to the north or south. The residents of the main land occasionally visit the islands and drive for deer, and in consequence these animals are shy and difficult to approach by the still hunter.

Finding nothing to interest or detain us at Clear Water Harbor, we headed our boat for the Anelote river, ten miles to the northward. Leaving the northern end of the harbor, the tourist must follow the channel for two miles toward the Anelote Keys, so as to clear an extensive sand bank bounding the northern side of the channel. After rounding the bank a north-west course must be kept, leaving the shore two or three miles to the right. At this distance from land the water will be found to be about four or five feet in depth, and a look-out must be kept for "nigger heads," black rocks, in some cases covered with but a few inches of water. The water is very clear, and no difficulty will be experienced in detecting them if ordinary care is taken. After making a few miles of northing, a long point will be noticed covered with tall pines, and to the left several small keys. By keeping close to the point and following the channel next the main land, the Anelote river will be found a quarter of a mile north of the point. A short distance from the mouth of the river, on the north side, the tourist will notice some stakes, and if he lands he will find a well of excellent water but a few yards from

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the beach. We found the river wide and shallow, and the navigation extremely difficult, in consequence of the existence of numerous and extensive oyster bars. Proceeding up the river one mile, we noticed a house on the left bank, and came to an anchor. In front of the house, excellent red sheepshead and weak fishing can be obtained.

10.—Subterranean Streams.

The morning after our arrival at the Anelote, we started for Salt Spring, two miles distant. Leaving the river to the left, we entered Salt Spring run, and soon found ourselves floating on the basin of the spring. We found the basin to be one hundred yards wide and eighty feet deep at the deepest place. The water of this spring differs from that of the many we have visited in the State, being dark in color, like that of the St. Johns river. The basin swarmed with fish, and large tarpum could be seen breaking water in every direction. It is named Salt Spring, but this is evidently an error, for the water in the basin is merely brackish, while in the run where the tide ebbs and flows the waters are salt. We have reason to believe that Salt Spring is the outlet of Lake Butler, distant two or three miles. This lake has several tributaries, but no visible outlet; the water is dark colored, and it is at a much higher level than Salt Spring. The brackish condition of the water in Salt Spring is evidently the result of tidal influence. Leaving Salt Spring and its outlet we entered the river and ascended it for three miles, where we dis-

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covered a stream on our right hand twenty feet in width and ten in depth. This we followed for half a mile, when we came in sight of Salt Lake, an interesting and picturesque sheet of water one mile long and half a mile wide. At the entrance of the lake, snipe, duck, coot, and curlews were visible in countless numbers, and large red-fish, sheepshead, and trout fled before the boat in hundreds. This sheet of water is worth visiting, especially if the day is warm and the sportsman fond of 'gator shooting. Lake Butler, a noted place for aquatic birds, is half a mile from the southern shore of Salt Lake. Deer hunting in this neighborhood is fair, and the region would be found worthy of a visit.

Finding nothing of special importance to detain us, we descended the river and started for the Wiccawatchee river, thirty-five miles to the northward. *En route* we sighted the mouth of the Pithlachestacootie river, but from information obtained we deem it unworthy of a visit. In steering a course for Bayport, at the mouth of the Wiccawatchee, we kept the main land from two to three miles to starboard, finding from four to five feet of water. In running along this section of the coast, it is essential that the tourist should keep a good lookout for "nigger heads." Bayport is easily recognized by a large storehouse and a pile of cedar logs. We reached the dock at three P., M., and went in search of soda crackers, and at the store laid in an addition to our stock. The storekeeper assured us that "his oranges were the best on the coast." Upon his recommendation we purchased a supply, and regret to say we found them very inferior. The present population numbers about twenty. Before the war large quantities of cedar timber were shipped from this point, but of late

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years the trade has almost ceased. Standing on the dock we noticed a large otter on the opposite side of the river, and tried the effect of a Winchester cartridge. It proved to be a line shot, but the elevation was too great, and the ball passed about one inch above his head. Ascertaining that the spring of the Wiccawatchee resembled those of streams farther north, we deemed it best to forego the pleasure of ascending the river.

From such data as we were enabled to collect, we have reason to believe that the country back of Bayport is well stocked with bear and deer, and feel assured that the sportsman may secure some excellent sport. The section referred to can be reached by land, by taking stage from Gainesville, or by leaving Ocklawaha steamers at Silver Springs; conveyance to Ocala and stage from Ocala to Brooksville. At the latter place a vehicle of some description could be obtained, by which Bayport, distant thirty miles, could be reached. The tourist will find the neighborhood of Burkville an interesting locality. The immediate neighborhood is hilly, some of the highest points attaining an altitude of over four hundred feet. The land is of a superior quality, water first class, and the climate during the summer months unexceptionable. In the neighborhood the sportsman will find some crystal lakes, surrounded by hills, where he can catch *quantum suff.* of trout and bream.

Leaving Bayport astern, we headed for the Chisiowilski, distant ten miles, which we reached in the afternoon. Fortune favored us, and we found the mouth of the river without difficulty. Passing up the river for a distance of five miles, we found two branches, and as a matter of course selected the deepest and plainest, which soon headed in a mud hole, to the disappointment of all.

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Returning, we tried the right-hand branch, and for half a mile poled the Spray through reeds and lily-pads, when we found the river to widen and deepen. We soon reached the head of the stream, and found an enchanting spot, one worthy of the pencil of an artist. The basin of the spring of the Chisiowilski is about one hundred feet in diameter, and the depth of the water in the spring thirty-eight feet. The water is as pellucid as air, and the most minute object can be plainly seen on the clear white bottom. From appearances, the water issued from an opening seven feet wide and four high. Looking over the side of the boat, we noticed hundreds of sheepshead, cavalli, bream, trout, and red and black groupers swimming in the basin. Being disposed to indulge in a fish supper, we went for the scaly customers, but before our bait reached the bottom the fish left the basin and disappeared in the subterranean channel. Disliking to be defeated, I lashed three hooks to a single gut, with the intention of hooking the fish in an unsportsmanlike manner. Upon their return to the basin we quietly dropped our snatch hook, but before it reached the bottom the fish took their departure. We devoted two hours to our piscatorial efforts, and succeeded in capturing seven small fish. Here we were favored with a drizzling rain-storm, lasting several hours, the first we noticed from the day we left Cedar Keys. Leaving the spring, we followed an old trail for a few hundred yards, when we reached open piney woods. Here we met a gentleman from Texas, who had left Texan northers behind and located at this point. He was engaged in the production of tropical fruits, and he appeared to be favorably impresed with the climate. He assured us that he could not be induced to return to his former

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home in Texas. We reluctantly bade farewell to this romantic and beautiful spot, and directed our course toward Homosassa.

A feature peculiar to the section of country between the Anelote and Withlacoochie rivers is the existence of a number of rivers that are formed by subterranean streams that issue from the earth at the base of an elevated region of land which follows the coast line at a distance of ten miles from the Gulf. To find the mouth of one of these streams is a matter of some difficulty to the uninitiated. For several miles from the shore the water is very shoal, and oyster bars and sand flats of great extent exist in troublesome numbers. Along the shore line the land is low, and is cut up by numerous bayous, bays, and blind rivers and creeks, and in consequence it is difficult to discover the entrance to some of the streams. If voyaging without a pilot, it is advisable to institute inquiries on every possible occasion, and pay particular attention to the existence of stakes. To enable them to find and trace the tortuous channels leading in between the oyster beds and sand flats, the coasters have planted stakes, which will serve as guide to the stranger. By following the course pointed out by the stakes, and paying attention to the set of the tide, as well as the deep water and the distances sailed, the wanderer will succeed in finding the mouths of the streams. But it need not surprise any wanderer if he should spend hours in vain search to find the entrance to some of the rivers in this section.

A coaster informed us that we could readily distinguish the entrance to the Homosassa river by the presence of the wreck of a blockade runner. At two P. M. we reached a point where we expected to discover the entrance to the river, and looked for the wreck; but

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we squinted and quizzed in vain. We turned the prow of the Spray toward the shore, but could not determine which opening was the mouth of the stream. Here was a passage, and there was another; openings in the salt marsh appeared to be innumerable. We entered a number, but soon found them to lead into shoal water. Night threw her mantle over the scene, and we anchored. About nine P. M. we heard the sound of voices, but soon after a boat containing four gentlemen hauled alongside. Upon inquiry we found that they hailed from Crystal river, and were *en route* to Jones', on the Homosassa. The pilot stated that he was unable to determine his position, but that the entrance to the mouth of the river was bounded to the north by a shell bank. We informed our new acquaintances that the shell bank they were in search of was but a few hundred yards distant, and if they would follow we would pilot them to the entrance. We landed at the shell bank, and after indulging in a boyish-like freak of setting fire to the decayed foliage of the yucca and palm trees, we anchored and turned in for the night.

Sportsman in search of Homosassa river will find its mouth ten miles south-east of the Crystal, and the same distance north-west of the Chisiowilski rivers. In approaching the mouth of the river a mass of rocks will be noticed a quarter of a mile north-west of the mouth, and a white shell bank from six to eight feet high on its northern side. For several miles in a westerly and southerly direction from the mouth of the river the water will be found to very shoal, and the navigation difficult in consequence of the existence of large beds of hard limestone rocks, extensive beds of can oysters, broad sand-flats, and sundry nigger heads. To parties who

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attempt the navigation of this section without a pilot, we would say, Shorten sail, keep a good look-out, and "go easy over the rough places."

11.—A Sportsman's Paradise.

The morning after our arrival at the mouth of the Homosassa we were moving by daylight, and after breakfast followed in the wake of our new friends, as their boatmen professed to be acquainted with the channel. We had not proceeded over one mile before we found the Spray to be hard and fast on a cove-oyster bar. As the boat belonging to our new friends was light draught, they left us alone in our glory. Finally we found the channel, and proceeded but a short distance when we discovered what appeared to be two rivers, and we naturally followed the widest. By the use of the lead we found the channel to shoal rapidly, so we returned and took the right-hand stream, and after sailing a distance of four miles we sighted a residence on a high shell bank and an attractive boat-house at the water's edge. As we reached the landing, the rain descended in torrents, and we pushed the stern of the Spray under the boat-house. We had barely secured the boat before a youth presented himself and invited us to accept the hospitalities of the house. We inquired for Mr. Jones, and were informed that he was absent, so we politely declined the invitation so hospitably extended. As it was blowing a gale we deemed it prudent not to light a fire in our stove, but indulged in a homœopathic meal, consisting of three red

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herrings, a cup of lemonade, and a few soda crackers per man. Our frugal repast was barely finished when we received a pressing invitation to dinner, and as our clothing was not very ornamental, we offered as an excuse that we had dined sumptuously. Soon after we noticed a lady running through the rain toward the boat-house, and her pleasant and smiling face convinced us that she was kind and hospitable, and, in words, she informed us that "Mr. Jones was absent, but that she was chief of the establishment under the circumstances." Finding that "no excuse would be accepted, and that we must make ourselves at home," we surrendered, and followed her to the dining room. Upon entering we found a large dining table groaning under a supply of edibles that would have gratified both a *gourmand* and a *gourmet*. For nearly two months we had not taken a seat at a table, and it was simply a caution to cooks to see the manner in which we deposited boiled and baked sheeps-head, roasted and stewed wild ducks, beef, vegetables, home-made bread, fresh milk and butter, an excellent dessert, and an indefinite number of the most delicious oranges.

After dinner we expressed a desire to leave and reach the head of the river, but Mrs. J. insisted upon our remaining until Mr. J. returned, and finding that excuses were useless, we accepted the invitation so hospitably tendered. Homosassa was the residence of the Hon. Mr. Yulee before the war, and the house is situated on a shell mound sloping to the river. Along the water's edge a permanent stone wall a quarter of a mile in length has been constructed. Near the stone-wall a row of gigantic fig-trees are growing, the spread of the branches of the largest being fifty-three feet. The river is about ten

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miles in length, and as soon as the weather permitted we examined it to its source, as well as the adjoining country. Two miles above Mr. J.'s residence we left the boat, and landed at the lower edge of the old sugar plantation. Here we found an old clearing of several hundred acres, which had been devoted to sugar culture in times past. In traversing the old plantation we noticed deer and turkey tracks in every direction. We reached in the river again at the old sugar house, and took seats in the yawl boat. Proceeding up the stream we noticed large fish in thousands fleeing before the boat. After a pleasant journey we found ourselves floating in the bosom of Homosassa Spring—truly an enchanting spot, a view of which repaid us for all our wanderings. Looking over the side of the boat we noticed a number of huge snapping turtles clinging to the rocky ledges, and cavalli, red-fish, bass, sheepshead, weak-fish and red and black grouper in thousands leisurely swimming about the basin. In this spring all the species of fish are ever ready to take a bait, and the follower of Old Isaac can obtain a surfeit of sport at any time. Owing to the voracity of the fish and the clearness of the water the piscator can select the variety of fish he wishes to capture. In consequence of the presence of a number of large turtles and such countless numbers of fish, the water in this basin is not as clear as it is in some others, thirty-five to forty feet being the limit where fish can be seen. We measured the deepest point in the basin and found the lead to reach bottom at forty-eight feet.

Around the basin and along the banks of the river we found large numbers of water turkeys, cormorants, fish-hawks, and species of the heron and crane families, which were more easily approached than on any

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stream we have visited. Ducks, not to be enumerated by thousands but by square acres, were visible to the right and left, and before and behind us. The sportsman can find accommodations at Mr. Jones', and can fully occupy his time. Near the house excellent sheepsheading exists, and these noble fish, of large size, can be captured until the arms ache. By trolling with a spoon or spinner, red-fish can be caught ranging from five to thirty pounds. A year or two since, a gentleman from the Hub engaged in this kind of fishing, and pickerel fisher like, placed the line between his teeth. He secured a bite, the line fouled, and at the end of the performance he was minus a tooth but landed a thirty-two pound red-fish. By visiting the spring four miles from the house, the knight of the rod can land fish of large size as rapidly as he can bait and secure his fish. If he desires larger and more clumsy game he can amuse himself capturing turtles ranging from eighteen to thirty inches in length. In the Homosassa and Salt rivers, and in the bayous and blind creek near Mr. Jones' residence, the shootist will find ducks by the square acre, and if he is disposed to engage in the destruction of larger game—such as pelicans, gannet, and an endless variety of herons and cranes—all that is necessary to be done is to lay in a stock of provisions, take a boat, and sail to one of the St. Martin's Keys—a few miles from the mouth of the Homosassa. On one of these keys the sportsman will find a rookery, where the sea birds, frequenting an area of probably forty miles, nightly collect to roost.

At the old sugar plantation two miles above the house, good quail and snipe shooting is obtainable. Bears exist in the hammocks, and can be captured if the sportsman secures the services of a "cracker" with his bear dogs.

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The neighborhood seems to be a favorite resort for deer, and for this description of the sport we can unhesitatingly recommend Jones' as a place of resort. The still hunter, by visiting the old sugar plantation on the edge of the pine timber, four miles from the house, will experience but little difficulty in securing a pair of antlers worthy of gracing his Northern home. For miles west and south-west of the house large areas of low-lying land exist, covered with a luxuriant growth of rushes and coarse grasses, with here and there islands of timber, consisting of gum, live and swamp oak, cedar and cabbage palms. The low lands furnish excellent feed, and the islands shelter for deer. Late in the year the rushes and grasses lose their vitality, and if a windy day is selected, thousands of acres can be burned over by the application of a single match. In a few weeks the flats will be covered with a luxuriant and succulent growth of grass, and deer will visit the locality in numbers. These flats are comparatively dry, and would furnish the fire-pan hunter an excellent field for sport. If parties who propose visiting Homosassa would communicate with Mr. Jones a few weeks in advance, he would burn off a few square miles of marsh for the benefit of his visitors. If turkey shooting is desired, the sportsman can enjoy it by ascending the river to the spring, and proceeding to the edge of the pine timber. Mr. Jones nephew, a mere lad, informed us that he had killed sixteen deer within a short period, and in hail of the house, on a small clearing on the opposite side of the river. As Frank was unacquainted with fire hunting, I suggested that we should engage in the sport. After supper we provided ourselves with some fat pine, and a long-handled frying-pan. We landed on the opposite

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bank at the clearing, lighted our fire, and had not proceeded over eighty yards before we noticed four fine deer within thirty yards. Fortunately for the deer, Frank had an acute attack of the buck fever and aimed at the Pleiades. While he was taking aim I heard voices at the house; hence here was deer shooting within a reasonable distance from home. Next day I suggested another hunt, and intimated that I would try my luck. After supper, several visitors, Harry, Frank, Mr. J.'s nephew, Fifteenth Amendment Dick, and Al Fresco—seven in all—left for the clearing, truly a sufficient number to prevent the possibility of securing a deer. We lighted our fire, and had not proceeded over one hundred yards before I noticed four deer within twenty yards of the light, but owing to the noise made by the seven pairs of feet tramping through the dry grass, they were alarmed, and before I could step in front of the light to insure accuracy of aim they bounded into the hammock. Looking to the right I noticed a pair of eyes at a distance of probably eighty yards. I gave him both barrels, and although wounded he escaped. Those who are posted will remark that it was madness to attempt fire hunting with such a retinue, and I am prepared to admit the uselessness of the proceeding, but I dislike to be selfish and insist on engaging in the sport with but one companion. On the first occasion our party numbered five, and on the last seven, and if deer can be so easily approached by such numbers, what would be the result if the sportsman carried his own head light, or was merely attended by the pan carrier.

Salt river is a tidal channel, extending from the Homosassa to the Crystal river, and is about ten miles in length, with its bottom literally paved with large and

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luscious-cooking oysters. The bars off the mouth of the Crystal river are covered with the largest and finest salt oysters to be found on the American coast. When he has visitors Mr. Jones visits these beds weekly, and obtains a boat load of these delicious bivalves for the benefit of his guests, who can have them cooked how or when they like, or can open and deposit them when the spirit moveth. Having referred to the bivalve attractions of the place, I may as well notice the host and hostess as well as the house and dietetic attractions.

Mr. Jones is a Bostonian, and served with honor in the First Massachusetts cavalry during the war. Visitors will find him quiet, intelligent, unobtrusive, and ever studious of the comfort of his guests. Mrs. Jones is a native of Bloomfield, New York, and will be found to be intelligent, affable, kind, and ever ready to contribute to the comfort and pleasures of those who favor her with their patronage. She seems to anticipate every want of her visitors, and as a cook and housekeeper she cannot be excelled. Everything was scrupulously clean, and the table in every way unexceptionable. What the visitor to Florida seldom meets with, he will find at Homosassa—the best of home-made bread, fresh milk twice daily, and fresh butter at least twice weekly. In addition to a lavish supply of the necessaries and luxuries of life, the visitor is expected to deposit an indefinite number of the most delicious oranges after each meal, between times, and before retiring at night. The house is near the river, one story high, and surrounded by a spacious veranda. The rooms open on the verandas on two sides, the ceilings being very high, and each having a fire-place in it. The beds are such as visitors seldom find in Florida. Owing to the limited number of rooms, Mr. Jones

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can accommodate but four couples in the main building, but at a distance of one hundred yards from the house, is Liberty Hall, where from two to four stags can sleep and enjoy themselves. If justified (and I sincerely hope he will be), Mr. Jones will add to his present building.

In my humble opinion no place in the State presents so many attractions for the sportsman, if we take into consideration the sporting advantages in connection with home comforts, excellent accommodations, superior table, perfect cleanliness, and an admirable climate. Sportsmen who wish to enjoy themselves, and at the same time be accompanied by their better halves, will find this place to offer many attractions. If a stag party of from two to four wish to enjoy themselves for a few weeks or months, we would recommend them to engage Liberty Hall. What surprised me most was the moderate charge for the accommodations furnished—from $10 to $12 per week. Visitors will find an ample supply of boats, and for a trifling charge, negroes living on the plantation will keep the piscator supplied with bait. Mr. Jones is the postmaster, and the place is provided with a weekly mail. We spent a week at Homosassa, and found but one thing to annoy, that being the fact that we were compelled to leave.

To those who propose visiting the locality we would say, provide a strong bass rod, a crab net, and a full supply of strong hooks and lines. In this connection we may remark that we tested at this point as well as many others, a sheepshead hook manufactured by Shipley & Son, of No. 503 Commerce street, Philadelphia, and we can unhesitatingly recommend it as unequalled for strength and temper. The only fault of the hook is

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in the shortness of the shank, which should be twice the present length.

Some of my readers will ask, Where is Homosassa, and how can it be reached ? which I will explain. It is about forty miles from Cedar Keys, and may be reached by two routes—one via Savannah, Fernandina, or Jacksonville to Cedar Keys, and the other via Silver Spring and Ocala. The sportsman can easily ascertain upon what day he will reach Cedar Keys, and by addressing Alfred E. Jones, postmaster, Homasassa, Florida, in advance of the day of arrival, Mr. Jones will be found on the keys with a boat to transport visitors to his place free of charge. If unable to communicate with Mr. Jones, a suitable boat may be chartered at Cedar Keys for about $10 for the trip. If the sportsman is desirous of visiting an interesting and attractive portion of the State, he can take steamer from Jacksonville to Silver Spring, and back from the spring to Ocala—a distance of six miles. From Ocala to Homosassa the distance is forty miles, over a good road, and E. J. Harris, of the Ocala House, will make the necessary arrangements for transportation of visitors to the hospitable ingle-side of A. E. Jones. We have at various times wandered over a large portion of the State, and in all sincerity can assure the readers that, taking everything into consideration, we found Jones', on the Homosassa, the most attractive point we have thus far found in Florida ; and if alive and kicking during the course of next winter we propose visiting there again, and it would afford me great pleasure to meet some of the sporting readers at the hospitable home of Alfred E. Jones.

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12.—Suggestions to Tourists.

Private business requiring Mr. Jones' presence at the settlement at Crystal river, we took advantage of the opportunity and followed in his wake. We reluctantly bade good-by to Mrs. Jones, and the unbounded hospitality and numerous sporting attractions of Homosassa. This was our first visit to this sportsman's paradise, and we have reason to believe that it will not be the last. Crystal river is distant about ten miles from the Homosassa, and the two are connected by a cross stream, known as Salt river, the latter being parallel with, and distant six miles from the Gulf. Two years since, two Northern sportsmen were rowing a small Whitehall boat at the Homosassa end of the river when a tarpum weighing 125 pounds leaped into the boat. The result was ludicrous in the extreme. In his efforts to escape, the motions of the fish imperilled the hull as well as the shins of the occupants. Oars were tried, but the sportsmen soon discovered that they would run the risk of knocking a hole through the boat's bottom. Jack-knives were tested, but the huge scale of the fish protected it. As a *dernier ressort*, the two-legged occupants sought refuge at either end of the boat, and waited until the fish became exhausted. For several miles after entering this stream, we found it to be literally covered with wild ducks, but as we could not utilize them, we refrained from wasting ammunition. This river is tortuous and shallow, and presents numerous difficulties in navigation in the way of extensive oyster bars and mud flats. The bivalves are very large, fat, and and almost inexhaustible. Having no experience in the

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canning business, we can form no idea of the effect of climate in interfering with the canning process; but if the climate did not prove too warm, we fancy that this would be one of the best locations in the United States for a canning establishment. Wages are low, and oysters of large size can be obtained in unlimited quantity for a trifling outlay. The prepared oysters could be cheaply shipped to New York, New Orleans, or Havana.

We reached the settlement of Crystal river early in the afternoon, and received a hearty welcome. The settlement consists of about one dozen buildings, and has considerable trade with the interior. We entered the basin, and found a number of springs which we sounded, the deepest measuring but eighteen feet. In the afternoon, the residents arranged for a fire hunt for our benefit, but as the night was chilly and as I was suffering from an attack of inflammation of my right thumb, following an injury, I deemed it best to remain on the Spray, and allow Frank and Harry to represent the party. In this connection we may remind the uninitiated that before they engaged in fire hunting it might be advisable for them to examine and note the size as well as distance apart of the eyes of horses, cows, and deer, as mistakes are liable to be made. One of the gentlemen who was instrumental in getting up the fire hunt, has a tender spot; and that is an error he committed in his first fire hunt. He sighted a pair of eyes, took deliberate aim, pulled trigger, and next day paid $25, the value of a neighbor's cow. Within a short period a Northern man settled not a hundred miles from New Smyrna, and resolved upon having some sport. He started with pan and double-barrelled gun, and after wandering several miles, succeeded in shining the eyes of two deer, and fired

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at both. They fell, and upon examination of the animals and the surroundings, he realized the fact that he had lost his way, was near his home, and in a sportsman-like manner had killed a heifer and colt belonging to himself.

Finding nothing very attractive about the settlement, we departed for the Crystal river oyster bars. These are situated about four miles from the main land, and should be visited by every sportsman who is fond of superior bivalves. By landing on the bars at low water, large and delicious oysters can be gathered in any quantity. We found them to be fat, and of the most excellent flavor. Leaving the oyster bar, we headed for the Withlacoochio river, distant ten miles. The opening of this river can be easily detected by the presence of a large saw-mill at the westerly side of the river's mouth. We encamped for the night near the mill, and the next morning commenced ascending the stream. We ascended for several miles, but in consequence of the height and density of the timber, we found our sail useless; as we were not inclined to pull against the rapid current, and as the river did not seem to present any sporting attractions, we returned to the mill and encamped for the night.

Next morning, at seven o'clock A. M., we hoisted sail and headed for Cedar Keys. Not being disposed to follow the trend of the coast and dodge oyster-bars and nigger-heads, we steered a course by compass, and reached the Keys at one P. M., at which point ended the cruise of the good boat Spray. We have wandered some little in this, as well as in other lands, but our trip, extending over a period of two months, we shall always review as the most pleasant one we have ever taken. Having found our tour so enjoyable and satisfactory, we feel dis-

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posed to try it again, visit the best fishing and hunting points, and examine the portion of coast lying between Punta Rassa and Cape Sable.

In taking a farewell of the readers who may have followed us in our cruise, I may remark that, however fishy some of our statements may appear, they can be relied upon. To day I received a letter from a gentleman residing in Savannah, in which I find the following:

"I have travelled considerably in Florida, more especially in the eastern and western points of South Florida; and I may here add, that while reading your interesting letters, I wandered in my memory over many familiar places with you, and I honestly congratulate you on the accuracy of your reports."

I may also remark that I have become so much attached to Floridians, and am so much pleased with the climate, that I have permanently settled in Jacksonville; and that it will, at all times, afford me pleasure to communicate to sportsmen visiting the State, any information in my possession. Our good friend, the editor, is at liberty to give my name to sportsmen who desire it. In the future we propose visiting localities away from the beaten track of tourist travel, and shall briefly describe their sporting advantages, for the benefit of gunnists and fishermen.

Having acquired some little knowledge of the outfit necessary for a trip to the south-west coast, we would advise those who intend visiting the region to lay in an ample supply of the best pilot bread in New York or Savannah. A portion of the stock could be forwarded by steamer to Tampa Bay, care of Miller & Henderson, and a portion to Punta Rassa, to care of telegraph operator. In a former communication, I stated that the steamer

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Emilie, of Roberts' line, carried the mail between Cedar Keys and Key West, touching at Tampa, Manatee, and Punta Rassa; but since that was written, the government has made a change, and the service is performed by a steamer belonging to Captain McKay, of Tampa. Sportsmen will find the captain a jolly, companionable, courteous and obliging Scotsman—one who is ever ready to convey information or confer a favor.

In a former number we referred to our outfit for the expedition, and have but a few suggestions to make. We would recommend sportsmen to provide themselves with a harpoon and grains, as these would be found useful in the capture of fin-fish and tarpum; and if more noble game would prove desirable, the aspirant for sporting fame may fasten to a large shark or devil-fish, and, to say the least, enjoy a tow. We frequently experienced the want of a light skiff; and can assure the sportsmen that one would be found very convenient. A large frying-pan, with a long handle, would be found very useful for fire hunting. In a recent issue of the "Forest and Stream," we noticed an advertisement of a lamp and reflector for night hunting, and from the description, have reason to believe that it might prove useful—or at least, we would like to give one a thorough practical test. Ammunition and fishing-tackle of good quality cannot be purchased at any point on the coast, and we would advise sportsmen to supply themselves with a suitable outfit. In this connection we cannot refrain from referring tc the fact that our fishing rods and tackle were supplied by Shipley & Son, of 503 Commerce street, Philadelphia; and gun, rifle, and ammunition by William Wurfflein, 208 South Second street, of the same city. The prices were moderate and quality proved to be in every way

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satisfactory; and from experience we can honestly recommend these parties to the notice of sportsmen.

A man Friday would be found very useful, and we would advise sportsmen to secure the services of a competent one. Any quantity of pilots and sailing-masters can be engaged on the south-west coast; but nearly all of them have a weakness—that of raising the little finger too high and too often. If any party of sportsmen should conclude to follow in my wake, I would advise them to secure the services of Henry Austin, of Beverly, New Jersey, who accompanied me on my trip; who is well posted as regards the difficulties of the navigation, and the best points for sporting. He is temperate, willing, industrious, and obliging; a good shot, a fair cook, and perfectly at home in a boat. He is in possession of a valuable amount of information regarding places visited, and would be found very useful as a guide and sailing-master. We unhesitatingly recommend him, and feel assured that if he should be engaged by any party that his services would be found valuable.

In concluding our brief notes of a sportsman's paradise, we may remark, that we have endeavored to be practical, and confine ourselves to data that would interest sportsmen; and if the end has been attained it will gratify

"AL FRESCO."

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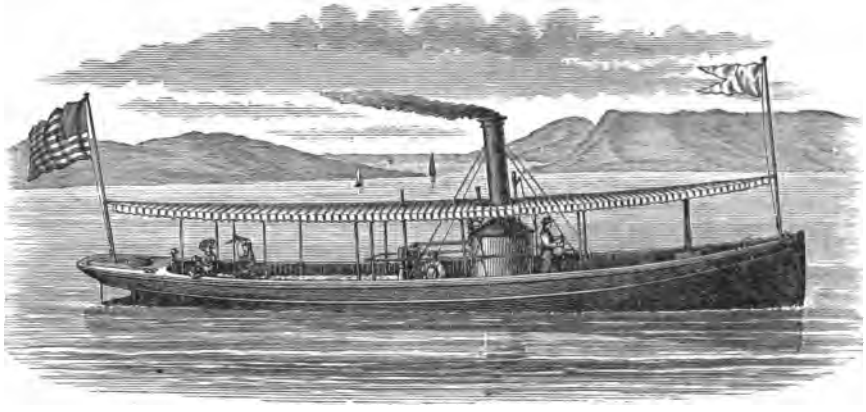

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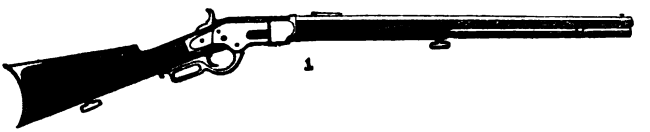

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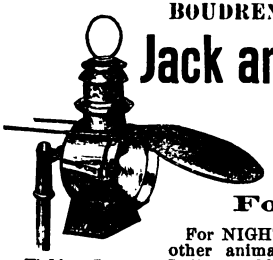

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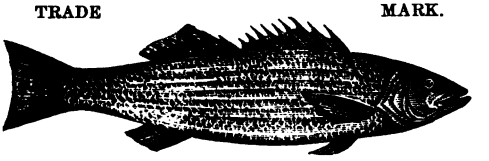

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